ISLAHI KHUTBAAT

DISCOURSES ON ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE

Part 2

By

Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

DARUL-ISHAAT
KARACHI-1, PAKISTAN.

DISCOURSES ON ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE

VOL. II

By

Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

Translated By

Iqbal Hussain Ansari

DARUL ISHA'AT

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The English version of the Islahi Khutbat, has been published by Darul Isha'at Pakistan. This is solely because of the Favours of Allah on us and the prayers of our mentors.

This is the translation of the reformative speeches of Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani may Allah prolong his benefits over us. He has been given these lectures for about ten years every week at the Bait ul Mukarram Masjid, Karachi. Those who attend these lectures gain much knowledge theoretically and practically. I, too, attend these lectures and have been deriving much advantage. These lectures are being recorded on audio cassettes and books are published subsequently. These cassettes and books cater to those who understand the Urdu language.

We at Darul Isha'at desired that an increased number of people should benefit from these lectures. Allah helped us get these books translated into English and publish them and He also provided us the necessary means. *Al-Hamdu-lil-laah,* after six years of continuous effort a complete set of these books is available to the readers. Let our readers remember that these books have been

translated from oral lectures of the honourable Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani and not from his writings.

They may, therefore, find in them the style of the spoken words that the translator may have retained here and there.

We have endeavoured to match the get up of the books with their invaluable content and have paid due care in the use of paper, printing and binding. We hope that this set of books will be very useful to our readers in Europe and the United States. They will gain beneficial knowledge from these books and be prompted to put their knowledge into practice.

Insha Allah they will find a great change in their everyday life.

We have published many books in English and many more are under preparation. Do write to us for a full list of these books.

Finally, I request my readers to remember me in their prayers as also my parents and family members. May Allah reward them.

KHALIL ASHRAF USMANI
S/O MOHAMMAD RAZI USMANI

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To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate

volumes under the title of "Islahi Khutbaat". Nine volumes of this compilations have already come out in Urdu by the grace of Allah which were widely circulated, read and benefited from.

Since long some of my friends were suggesting that these addresses be rendered into English as well so that they may be useful for the English readership. I was reluctant to act upon the suggestion because, as told earlier, these addresses were not formal lectures on a particular subject. They were in fact discussions, on different aspects of our lives, undertaken with frankness rather than formalism. They some time lack the sequence usually expected from a well considered writing. Therefore, I do not know how far their translation will be as meaningful and effective as it was proved to be in the original Urdu language. However, my nephew, Mr. Khalil Ashraf Usmani, the proprietor of Darul Ishaat, requested Mr. Iqbal Ansari and Mr. Rafiq Abdur Rehman to translate these Khutbaat into English. Both of these gentlemen undertook the task and the outcome of their noble effort is appearing before the readers. I had advised them not to be too strict in literal translation and to render the basic idea in their own style. I had no opportunity to go through the manuscript of their translation but had an occasion to have a cursory look on some passages. To the best of my assessment the translation I have seen is correct and conveying. I hope that it will help readers to understand the basic theme of these Khutbaat. May Allah grant the best reward to the translators and publisher of this book and make it beneficial for the readers. I would again remind the readers that it is not a book properly authored by me. It is the compilation of my extempore discussions therefore, I extend my apology if some readers find the sequence of thoughts somehow disturbed in some places. However, the readers should concentrate on the message given and not on the style adopted.

Muhammad Taqi Usmani

FOREWORD

To The Urdu Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله وكفى وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

All Praise belongs to Allah Who is Sufficient. And, peace be on His chosen servant.

For many years now, I have been delivering talks on religious subjects in compliance with the advice of my elders every Friday after 'Asr prayer.

People of different walks of life attend these meetings, and there are women too. By the Grace of Allah, I derive much benefit myself from these talks and my listeners too feel a sense of advantage. May Allah cause the series of talks a means of reformation for all of us. *Aameen*!

My close colleague, Maulana Abdullah Memon, has been recording these talks for some time and distributing the cassettes. I have been told by my friends that these cassettes have been much beneficial to the general body of Muslims.

The number of cassettes has now exceeded two hundred and fifty. Maulana Abdullah Memon has reduced some of these cassettes to writing and brought them out in the form of small booklets which are now compiled together in book-form under the name of Islahi Khutbaat (Discourses on Islamic Way of life)

I have revised some of the speeches and the Maulana has done a very useful work by annotating quotations of the

Ahadith in my speeches with proper references to their source. This work has proved very useful.

In reading this book, my readers must remember that it is not a formal composition but a collection of speeches made at different times penned down from recording. Therefore, they will sense the style of an oral dialogue in these articles. The benefit that accrues to any Muslim from these articles is merely a blessing of Allah for which he must be thankful to Him. But, if there is a slip in these articles or something superfluous, then that is a lapse on my part. I must say, however, that my aim in delivering these talks was not simply to speak out but-before everything else- I had my reformation in mind, and then that my listeners may be drawn towards their own reformation.

Do not let the written word please you
Or the working of fate worry you!
I have by your memory alone
What of the text and what of its meaning

May Allah through His Grace and Favour let these writings be a means of our reformation, and a treasure for the Hereafter. May He reward well the compiler and publisher of these articles. *Aameen.*

Muhammad Taqi Usmani.
12 Rabi-ul- Awwal 1414 A.H

Series :9

THE STATUS AND RIGHTS OF A WIFE IN ISLAM

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue	:	Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	Friday, 29th May, 1992 After 'Asr Prayers

When the relation of wife and husband is established by uttering, the two sacred words of offer and acceptance during the Nikah ceremony, the girl (now a bride) honours the implications of these two words so solemnly that she leaves her parents, brothers and sisters, her hearth and home, her family and the entire clan, and becomes, as it were, a purchased maid of her husband. She has thus become bound to pass her lifetime with a stranger, in a strange house and a strange environment. Will you not take notice of all this sacrifice on the part of that girl who is now your wife and at your exclusive disposal? How would you have felt if the matter had been the reverse; if, after the marriage, you had been asked to leave your family and your parents? What a trying predicament it would have been for you! So have regard for this sacrifice of her and behave with her amicably and fairly.

THE RIGHTS OF A WIFE IN ISLAM

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم.

وَعَاشِرُوْهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ج (سورۃ النساء: ۱۹)

قال الله تعالی :

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيْعُوْٓا اَنْ تَعْدِلُوْا بَيْنَ النِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيْلُوْا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوْهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ ط وَاِنْ تُصْلِحُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا. (سورۃ النساء ۱۲۹)

وعن ابی هريرة رضی الله تعالیٰ عنه قال قال رسول الله صلی الله عليه وسلم استو صوا بالنساء خيرا فان المرأة خلقت من ضلع وان اعوج مافی الضلع اعلاه فان ذهبت تقيمه كسرته وان تركته لم يزل اعوج فاستوصوا بالنساء. (صحيح بخاری كتاب النكاح بان المداراة مع النساء حديث نمبر ٥١٨٤)

All praise to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his Companions. His mercy and blessings in abundance.

And Almighty Allah said: But consort with them in kindness. (4:19)

You will not be able to deal equally between (your) wives, however, much you may wish to

do so. But turn not altogether away (from one), leaving her in suspense, If you do good and be righteous, then surely Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.(4:129)

Importance of the rights of the servants (of Allah)

Allamah Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه is commencing a discussion of the rights of the servants (of Allah) in the light of these verses and the traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ I have already mentioned repeatedly that "the Rights of the servants are a very important branch of religion. Its importance lies in the fact that "the Rights of Allah" may be pardoned by repentance. If God forbid-some negligence ever occurs in the matter of Allah's rights, it is very easy to remedy this negligence by means of repentance and seeking Allah's pardon with a feelings of remorse and regret. The negligence can thus be remedied. As for the rights of the servants, if they are violated, they are not pardoned by repentance and feelings of remorse and regret and by seeking pardon, unless the usurped rights are restored to the right-holders or the latter willingly forgoe their rights in his favour. Therefore the matter of rights of people is a matter of serious consideration.

Negligence in the matter of the Rights

Serious indeed is the subject of the rights of the servants of Allah, yet equally serious is the negligence of people towards this subject in our society. There are only a few aspects of worship that we have taken as *Deen* (Faith), e.g, Prayer, Fasting, *Hajj, Zakat,* Remembrance, Recitation of the Holy Qur'an, the recital of some sacred names or words. We regard these items as *Deen* but we have excluded from *Deen* the Rights of the servants; similarly we have also ex-

cluded from *Deen* the rights concerning social living. One who is negligent in the discharge of these rights does not feel that he is committing any serious offence.

Backbiting is a violation of People's rights

Take a simple example, If a Muslim is addicted (God forbid) to drinking wine he will be looked down upon by every Muslim who has even the least touch with the faith and the drunkard himself will feel ashamed that he is committing a sin. On the other hand a person who is addicted to backbiting is not hated in the society like the drunkard, nor does the backbiter himself feels that he is a sinner or criminal, although both the sins are equally heinous and base. But no, backbiting is more vicious sin than drinking wine; firstly, because it comes within the definition of the rights of the servants and secondly, because Almighty Allah has used for it in the Holy Qur'an a very horrid similitude the like of which He has not for any other sin. He has thus said in surah Al-Hujarat, verse no 12:

> And do not spy: nor backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother; you would then abhor that. (49:12)

Thus a backbiter has been compared to one who eats the flesh of his dead brother. So vicious is this sin! Yet it has become common in the society. There is hardly an assembly where this sin is not committed. What is worse, it is not condemned at all as if the faith has nothing to do with this sin.

***'Ihsan* is desirable at all times**

Hazrat Dr. Muhammad Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ may Allah exalt his status, is my spiritual Guide (Shaikh or Pir). One day he related the following incident:

A man called on me and told me with a gusto of pleasure and pride that thank God, he had attained the rank of "*Ihsan*". "*Ihsan*" is a very exalted status, as is mentioned in a tradition:

ان تعبد الله كانك تراه فان لم تكن تراه فانه يراك (صحيح البخاری، کتاب الایمان، باب سؤال جبریل حدیث نمبر ۵۰)

(Sahih Bukhari, the book of belief-chapter Inquiry in Hadith Jibrael tradition no: 50).

This means that you should worship Almighty Allah, as you are seeing Allah and if this be not possible worship Him with the belief that He is seeing you. This is the rank of "*Ihsan*". That gentleman told the respected Doctor Sahib that he had attained the rank of "*Ihsan*" Hazrat Doctor Sahib congratulated him on the attainment, as it was a great blessing of Allah and put to him this question: Do you realise the blessing of "*Ihsan*" only during the prayers or do you realise it also during your dealings with your wife and children that Almighty Allah is seeing you? He replied: What the Tradition says is that while pray one should feel that one is seeing Allah, or Allah is seeing him. I thought that "*Ihsan*" is related with worship only and not with other activities of life Hazrat Doctor Sahib said to him: That is why I put this question to you, because it is generally misunderstood that "*Ihsan*" is required during prayers, remembrance or recitation only, although it is required at all times and in all stages and walks of life. If you are sitting in a shop doing some business, "*Ihsan*" is required there also. You should realise in your heart that Almighty Allah is seeing you. "*Ihsan*" is also required when you are dealing with your subordinates. You should feel that Allah is seeing you even when you are dealing with your wife, children friends and neighbours. This is really what "*Ihsan*" means. It is not confined only to prayers and worship.

That woman shall enter Hell

It should be borne in mind very well that the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ cover every branch of life. It is narrated that once the people inquired from the Holy Prophet ﷺ about a woman: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah, there is a woman who remains engaged with worship all day and night. She is mostly busy with optional prayers, remembrance of Allah and recitation of the Holy Qur'an, she is always seen engaged in these acts of devotion. What do you think about the fate of this woman? The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked that Companion رضى الله عنه about her dealings with the neighbours. The Companion رضى الله عنه replied that she did not behave well with the neighbours. The women of the neighbourhood are not pleased with her. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: She will enter the Hell.(Bukahri p-48, tradition no: 911, chapter Does not trouble his neighbour)

That woman shall enter Paradise

At another time a question was put to the Holy Prophet ﷺ about a woman who did not observe many items of optional worship and remained contented only with the obligatory and essential duties and sometimes she performed the *Sunnah Muwakkadah* (the confirmed *sunnah*) prayer She did not observe the optional prayers, rememberance, recitation, etc. more than this. Her dealings with the neighbours and others were however, amicable. The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: She will enter the Paradise.

Who is a Pauper?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained in these traditions that if anyone observes optional prayers it is very good, but if he does not do so he will not be asked in the Hereafter why he did not observe such and such optional forms of worship. This is because the very word Nafl (optional)

means that if anyone performs this optional worship, he will receive reward, and if he does not do so, there is no sin on him. On the other hand the rights of the servants (of Allah) are something about which the people will be questioned on the Day of Judgement. The entry into Paradise or Hell depends on the nature of replies given to these questions.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained in a Tradition as to who is a pauper; he is reported to have said: A person will bring with him on the Day of Judgement lots of good deeds; but in the world he usurped someone's rights, spoke ill of someone, injured someone's feelings and hurt someones heart. The result of all this will be that he will have to pay to others all the good deeds he brought with him and will have to take upon himself the sins of others while he has no good deeds left with him to compensate his creditors. The matter of the rights of the servants (of Allah) is thus a very important matter in the *Shari'ah*. (Tirmidhi, chapter on Accounts taking and ransom Tradition no: 2533).

The Rights of people are three-fourths of *DEEN*

It has already been pointed out that if the "Islamic Jurisprudence" which deals with the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* is divided into four equal parts, only one part will be found to deal with matters relating to worship, and the remaining three parts will be found to contain injunctions with regard to matters that are related to people and their life. You may know the name of '*Hidayah*' which is a renowned book of Hanafi jurisprudence in four volumes. The first volume deals with forms of worship in which problems concerning *Purity* (*Taharat*), *Prayer* (*Salat*), *Fasting, Zakat and Hajj* have been discussed. The remaining three volumes are concerned with the subjects dealing with people and their rights, social living and the rights of the servants (of Allah). It can be easily inferred from

this that the subject of the rights of the servants represents one-fourth of *Deen* (Faith). Therefore, a very important chapter is now commencing. May Almighty Allah help us, by His mercy, to read and listen to it with a firm mind, to act upon the injunctions. May He also help us to discharge the rights of the servants (of Allah) according to His pleasure and will.

The miserable condition of women before Islam.

The first Chapter which Allamah Nuwawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has included is the "Chapter of counsels about women", meaning those counsels which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given about the rights of women. The reason for allotting this subject in the first chapter of the book is that the greatest shortcoming and negligence are committed in the matter of women's rights. During the Days of Ignorance, before the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, women were treated like cattle, devoid of humanity, deprived of all rights, whatsoever. In those days of darkness the people did not recognise any rights due to women who were tolerated in the houses no better than pet animals like goats and sheep; but the conditions totally changed after the advent of Islam and under the sacred teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Amicable behaviour with women

At that time the world was unaware of heavenly guidance. It was the Holy Prophet ﷺ who for the first time made the world alive to the rights due to women whereunder they should be accorded nice treatment.

At the very out set Allamah Nuwawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has cited a verse of the Holy Qur'an that is very comprehensive on this subject:

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

But consort with them in kindness (4:19)

Almighty Allah has addressed all Muslims, commanding them to behave, and consort with women in kindness; associate with them in life with goodwill and sympathy and never give them trouble. This is a general guidance. This verse is, as it were, the heading and the text of this chapter. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained this verse by his words and practice. He ﷺ gave such importance to the need of showing misbehaviour to women that he is reported to have said in a Tradition:

خيار كم خياركم لنساء هم وانا خيار كم لنسائى

> Meaning: The best of you are those who behave well with their women and I am best of you in behaving well with my women. (Tirmidhi - chapter on right of a women over her husband, Tradition no: 1172)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ attached so much importance to the protection of the rights of women and ensuring good behaviour with them that he has explained this matter in many Traditions. The first Tradition on this subject is one narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ wherein the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

استوصوا بالنساء خيرا

> I advise you to wish well for the women. You should accept this advice of mine.

The Holy Qur'an enunciates only the principles

Before proceeding ahead it is better to advise that the Holy Qur'an generally gives the basic principles, without going into the minute details of the issue. This procedure is followed even in describing the injunctions about the prayer which is such an important pillar of *Deen* (Faith) to the estab-

lishment of which reference has been made in the Qur'an at seventy three places. Yet the Holy Qur'an does not furnish any details about how prayer (*salat*) is offered, how many *Rak'at* should one offer and other injunctions validating or invalidating the *salah*. The Qur'an itself has not detailed these factors but left it for the Holy Prophet ﷺ who taught the companions these details both by his words and practice. The same is the case with *Zakat* which has also been mentioned in the Qur'an almost at the same number of places.The Qur'an, however, does not clarify the prescribed value on which *Zakat* becomes due for payment, nor it speaks of possessions on which it is leviable. Like the prayer these details about *Zakat* were also left for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to explain. Thus it becomes clear that generally the Qur'an mentions only the basic principles and does not go into minute details.

Domestic life is the Foundation of the entire civilisation

The relationship between man and woman and among the members of the family are so important that the Qur'an has described in clear terms its minutest details and has spoken in details relating to this important topic. Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained fully those points. The edifice of the entire human civilisation stands on the relations between man and woman and on the domestic life of man. If the relationship between man and woman is sound, smooth and one discharges the rights of the other, then the affairs of the household shall run smoothly and the children shall be brought up on the right lines and this ensures the betterment of society on which stands the edifice of the social living as a whole. On the other hand, if the household affairs are mismanaged and there are differences and disagreements between husband and wife the children are affected

adversely and you may very well imagine about the standard and character of the nation manifested by such spoilt and ill mannered children. The rules and regulations governing this aspect of the society are called family laws or household regulations. In view of their importance, the Holy Qur'an has dealt them in details:

Is the woman born of crooked Rib?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has set a nice example for this – an example that is unique in its effect and import. Some have explained it by saying that first of all Allah created Hazrat Adam عليه السلام then He created Hazrat Hawwa عليه السلام (Eve) from his rib. Some learned men have said by way of explanation that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has compared a woman to a rib which is crooked to see but its beauty and health consist in its crookedness. If anyone tries to remove its crookedness by straightening it, it will break and cease to be a rib. To restore to its previous state, it will have to be made crooked then joined together with plaster. The same idea has been beautifully expressed in a Tradition:

ان ذهبت تقيمها كسرتها

That is, if you want to straighten it, you will only break it.

وان استمتعت بها استمتعت بها وفيها عوج

And if you want to enjoy it you may enjoy it despite its crookedness.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, thus set a wise example that its crookedness is its beauty and health which will be destroyed by straightening it.

It is not a defect of woman

Some people use this saying against women as being their defect in a woman. In other words, they say that since a woman has been created from a crooked rib, so is she crooked in her conduct and character, by her nature. This is, however, not the meaning of the Tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ .

The deviousness of women is natural

It needs to be borne in mind that Almighty Allah has created man and woman, each with different tendencies and attributes. On account of this difference between the nature and temperament of the two, man thinks about a woman that she is opposed to his masculine nature and sentimentality, although this natural tendency of a woman against a man's natural bent and tendency is not a defect. It is the natural requirement of her nature that she should reflect in her character some innocent crookedness. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If you find in a woman something which is against your natural tendency on account of which you think that she is crooked, do not condemn her on this account; rather ignore it by thinking that it is the natural demand of her nature. If you want to straighten her she will break; if you want to benefit by her you can do so despite her crookedness.

"Negligence" is a part of beauty in a woman

Today the times have changed; as a result the values have also changed. A defect in a man is more often looked upon as a point of virtue and beauty in a woman. If we go through the Holy Qur'an carefully we shall see what, is generally considered a defect in a man is considered a point of beauty in a woman. For example, it is a defect in man to be

ignorant and negligent, on account of which he is unaware of what is happening in the world. A man has been entrusted with the affairs of the world. To discharge these he needs learning and awareness. If he is devoid of these qualities and abilities, he is faulty and defective to this extent. As for a woman, negligence has been considered by the Qur'an as an item of beauty for her. Allah has said:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَرْمُوْنَ الْمُحْصَنٰتِ الْغٰفِلٰتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ (سورة النور: ٢٣)

Surely, as for those who slander virtuous, negligent believing women..... (24:23)

The word "negligent" meaning that they are unaware of what is happening around them in the world. The Qur'an has considered here "negligence" or "unawareness" as an attribute of beauty. It is obvious from this that if a woman is ignorant of the affairs of the world, duties, excepted, this is not a defect but an attribute of beauty as described by the Qur'an.

Do not try to straighten her bent by force

Thus we see a defect in man is not considered a defect in woman and what is not a defect in man is sometimes looked upon as a defect in woman. A man is, therefore, not allowed to be harsh to a woman and misbehave with her if he finds her behaving in her womanly way. The very meaning of her comparison with a rib is that, by nature, she should be different in temperament from you. So now do not try to straighten her by force.

The root cause of the entire conflict

The above is based on a Tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Who can claim to know more about the nature of man and women than the Prophet of Allah? He diagnosed the root cause of all the conflicts between man and woman.

Man insists that a woman should he exactly like himself in all her behaviours. This is not possible as she has been created different from him.

Be conscious of her good habits

In another tradition of this chapter Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated;

عن ابی هريرة رضى الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

لا يفرك مؤمن مؤمنة ان كره منها خلقا رضى منها آخر (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الرضاع، باب الوصية بالنساء)

(Sahih Muslim-Book of suckling chapter consel about women)

In this Tradition the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned a wonderful principle that a believing man should not hate a believing woman altogether. In other words, the man should not condémn her totally on the false plea that she is no good. If she has some undesirable triats in her conduct she must have in her some desirable traits also.

The first principle which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught is that when two persons live together, some habit of the one is pleasant and some other habit unpleasant to the other. If the woman has some unpleasant habit in her, then do not condemn her on account of that habit altogether, rather look for and remember her pleasant habits and thank Almighty Allah for them. If you follow this practice it is quite possible that the hatred in your heart for the dark side of her conduct and character may gradually lose its severity and importance.

Man, in fact, is ungrateful. If he finds any defects in her he totally changes his opinion about the person concerned and forgets about his good qualities. In view of those few faults and defects, he is always critical about him and misbehaves with him. Such attitude is unreasonable.

Everything has virtues and vices in it

There is nothing in the world which is all virtue and all vice. Almighty Allah has, by His wisdom, endowed everything of His creation with virtue and vice. You are sure to find some good qualities in every person, may he be an infidel, an idolater or even worse.

An English proverb

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said; A word of wisdom is a lost property of a believer. He must pick it up wherever he finds it. So there is no harm in picking up a word of wisdom even from an English Proverb.

The proverb said that even a watch which has gone out of order speaks the truth at least twice every day. Suppose that the watch stopped at 12 hrs., 5 mts,. As the time 12-5 occurs twice during the 24 hours, the dead watch shall tell the correct time twice at 12-5 hrs, although it will remain silent at other times.

The moral we draw from this English proverb is that if one is in search of goodness with hope and sincerity one can surely find this goodness even from the most condemned and throw-away objects.

There is nothing bad in the workshop of Nature

My father Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Sahib رحمۃاللہ علیہ used to recite frequently the following Urdu couplet of the late Dr. Muhammad Iqbal:

نہیں ہے چیز نکمی کوئی زمانے میں
کوئی برا نہیں قدرت کے کارخانے میں

There is nothing useless in the earth
There is nothing bad in the workshop of nature.

Whatever Almighty has created has created it with His wisdom and by His will. If you reflect on it you will surely find in Allah's creation point of Wisdom and benefit. Instead man looks for faults and short comings only and ignores the good points and bright sides of things. Thus he becomes pessimistic and commits transgression and injustice.

Always look for the good qualities of women

Almighty Allah has said in His Book :

فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوْهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ اَنْ تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْئاً وَيَجْعَلَ اللهُ فِيْهِ خَيْراً كَثِيْراً

For if you hate them, it may happen that you hate a thing wherein Allah has placed much good. (4:19)

If for some reason you do not like those women whom you have married, yet it is just possible that Almighty Allah may have endowed them with much goodness and blessings. Hence this command that you should look only for the good qualities of women, so that you may receive solace and comfort from them and thus the doors of mistrust and misbehaviour may not be opened.

Educative story of A saint

Hazrat Maulana Shah Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has related the story of a saint who had a very ill mannered and aggressive wife. She always found faults with her hushand. Whenever the saint entered his house the wife started quarrelling with him. Someone asked him why he did not get rid of those daily wrangles and squabbles by resorting to divorce. The saint replied: it is very easy for me to divorce her but there is one reason for not doing so. Despite all her defects, she has one very good quality which prevents me from parting with her; and that is the quality of loyalty with which Almighty Allah has adorned her. Supposing I am :r-

rested and imprisoned for some crime, for a term of fifty years, she will not move even an inch from the corner to which I confine her, and she will never cast a glance at anyone else. This quality of loyalty is invaluable.

Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Jan'an and his over-sensitiveness

Hazrat Mirza Mazhar jan-e-Jan an رحمۃاللہ علیہ was a renowned saint of the Indian sub-continent. He was so touchy and over-sensitive in his temperament that if anyone put the glass on the pitcher in a tilting position or if he saw his bedding creased he would feel headache, unfortunately he had to deal with an ill-mannered wife. She was always murmuring something against her husband. Strange are indeed the ways whereby Allah tests His servants and raises their ranks. The wife of this pious saint was an ordeal for him which he tolerated with patience throughout his lifetime and expected that Allah may pardon his sins as a recompense for this ordeal.

The women of our society are Nymphs of Paradise

Hakimul Ummat, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ used to say that the women of the Indo-Pakistan are like nymphs, because they are endowed with the qualities of faith and loyalty. Although these qualities are slowly fading under the impact of the modern Western civilisation and culture, yet the spirit of loyalty is so deep-rooted in them that they are always ready to sacrifice their lives for their husbands in all circumstances, and they can never cast their glances on anyone other than their husbands. In fact the saint, referred to above demonstrated obedience to the injunction implied in the following Tradition.

ان كره منها خلقًا رضى آخر

If one habit of the woman is unpleasant, there must be some pleasant habit in her which should be taken into consideration and good treatment should be meted out to the woman on account of this one pleasant habit in her.

People generally look at the dark side in the conduct and character of their women and lose sight of the bright side in them. This tendency is the root cause of the bitterness prevailing in our society.

It is immorality to beat one's wife

The third Tradition of this chapter is as under:

عن عبدا لله بن زمعة رضى الله عنه أنه سمع النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم يخطب ثم ذكر النساء فوعظ فيهن فقال:

"العبد احد كم فيجلد امرأته جلد العبد فلعله يضاجعها من اخريومه"

(Sahih Bukhari the book of marriage - It is hateful to beat women tradition no: 5204).

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon in which he mentioned many important topics of Islamic behaviour. The following is the point which he ﷺ touched on the subject under discussion: He said: It is very bad that one of you beats his wife as a master beats his slave and on the other hand he uses the same wife to satisfy his sexual desire. Then how immoral and shameless it is that one should beat one's wife so severely!

Three steps of reforming a wife

As I have already stated, the Holy Qur'an has taken great care to mention in detail concerning husband-wife relations:

The differences and disagreements between husband

and wife start when the husband feels offended at some action or habit of the wife. The Qur'an advises that in such a situation the husband should look for some lovely and pleasant quality in the character and dealings of his wife. If the husband fails to discover in his wife any such good points and feels that correction and reform are needed, then the Holy Qur'an has prescribed the following course to reform and rectify it.

وَالّٰتِىْ تَخَافُوْنَ نُشُوْزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوْهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوْهُنَّ فِى الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوْهُنَّ (سورة النساء ٣٤)

As for those (women) from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them and banish them to beds apart (from yours) and beat them. (4:34)

First of all you should advise them in a lenient and polite manner and with love to give up their bad habits and reform themselves. This is the first step of reform. If they respond favourably to admonition and accept your advice, do not go further and treat the chapter closed. If this does not help and they insist upon their misconduct then the second step is to separate your bed and give up sleeping with them on the same bed. If they have sense, they will surely reform themselves and act upon advice. (Details of separating the bed will follow shortly).

Physical punishment to a wife

If the second step of the reform also fails then it will be necessary to resort to the third step, which is to inflict on the wife some physical punishment; but what kind of physical punishment and to what extent? The Holy Prophet ﷺ answered these questions in his sermon on the occasion of his Farewell *Hajj* (حجة الودع) in which he said: (واضربو هن ضرباغير مبرح) (beat them very lightly so as not to injure them). To sum

uxdsw3p, effort should be made so as to settle matters without the expedient of this punishment. If it is found unavoidable, it is permitted only with the condition that it should be very light, the intention being only to enforce discipline and not to inflict pain and injury. It is not lawful beating one's wife in a way that should leave a mark on the body. (A Tradition on this subject follows).

The behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed away from this world he left behind nine sacred wives رضی الله عنهن. These wives were not angels sent down from the heaven; they were members of this world and society. Sometimes, bitterness occurred among them as is usual and natural among co-wives. Sometimes such problems also arose as usually arise between husbands and wives. Hazrat Ayesha رضی الله عنها has narrated: Not only did the Holy Prophet ﷺ ever raise his hands on any of his wives, but it was also his habit to enter the house with a smiling face.

The Prophet's *Sunnah* (practice)

It is the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that men should not raise their hands at women (to beat them). The permissibility of punishing physically is restricted only to abnormal and unavoidable situations. In fact beating women is not the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ; his *Sunnah* is what Hazrat 'Ayesha رضی الله عنها has narrated.

A miracle of Dr. Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ my spiritual guide sometimes related to us, by way of a lesson, that a period of fifty-five years had passed of his marriage, he never talked to his wife during these fifty five years in an angry

tone. The walking of a man on the surface of the water and his flying in the air is taken as a miracle. It is more surprising that one should not talk to his wife even in an adverse tone for as long as fifty five years.

And his respectable wife says that her husband, Dr. Sahib, never asked her to bring to him a glass of water. She, however, served him as best as possible of her own sweet will and as a blessed and virtuous duty.

Tariqat is nothing but public service

Hazrat Dr. Sahib used to say: I consider myself to be a servant whom Allah has sent to this world for service. This is my belief and with this belief I want to serve others and depart from this world. I am duty bound to serve all my friends, acquaintances, associates and pupils. I was not sent to this world as a master to be served by others. He considered the position of a servant of people to be an elevated rank. He then recited the famous persian couplet:

ز تسبیح و سجادہ و دلق نیست
طریقت بجز خدمت خلق نیست

> *Tariqat* (spiritual way) is nothing but public service. It does not consist in the robes and the prayer-rag and the saintly garments (signs of godliness).

Tariqat in fact, stands for public service. Dr. Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say: When I understood that I am a servant and not a master, how can a servant order others to do this and that? He spent his entire life by doing his personal work without the assistance of anyone else. This is a practical example of how the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ should be followed. As for ourselves we do follow the *Sunnah* in rituals only. It is necessary to follow the *sunnah* in

dealings with others social living and in every mode of leading our private life.

Verbal claim is not enough

Living according to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is highly rewarding. Through such living man can smoothen his worldly life as well as his life in the Hereafter. But this success cannot be attained only by making empty claims.

وكل يدعى حبا ليلى وليلى لا تقر لهم بذاك

This means that everyone claims to love Laila, but Laila herself does not acknowledge their claim).

This is achieved only by means of sincere work and devotion. By his character, conduct and practice man should ensure that he does not cause the least harm even to the person with whom he happens to be on unfriendly terms.

In short, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has illustrated, by his own practice, the THIRD STEP of reforming an errant wife. Throughout his lifetime he never raised his hands on any one of his sacred wives. However he was sometimes irritated by their behaviour, but he never reacted to it. Those who beat their wives are declared the worst men by the Prophet ﷺ.

عن عمرو بن الاَحْوص الجشمى رضى الله عنه انه سمع النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم فى حجة الوداع يقول بعد ان حمد الله تعالى واثنى عليه وذكره ووعظ ثم قال:

"الاواستو صوا بالنساء خيرا فانما هن عوان عندكم ليس تملكون منهن شيئاً غير ذلك الا ان ياتين بفاحشة مبينة...... الخ " (ترمذى، كتابُ التفسير، باب ومن سورة التوبة، حديث نمبر ۳۰۸۷)

(Tirmidhi book of Tafsir, chapter Surah Taubah Tradition no: 3087).

Prophetic Address in the Farewel Pilgrimage

In the above Tradition an extract has been given from the Farewel address of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In this address he ﷺ addressed the assembly of the companions in clear words that after that year he might not see them at that place. So in this address he included all those points that he feared that the *Ummah* might deviate from the right path, and thus he wanted to leave behind for the guidance of the *Ummah* a perfect code of life to be followed. In this address he ﷺ tried to block all the possible paths of deviation and error.

The address is quite lengthy but different parts of this address have been stated on different places. This is also a part of it in which the various aspects of relationship of man and woman has been discussed. Special stress has been laid on the need that men should acknowledge the rights of women and honour them. You may realise the importance of these rights from the fact that he delivered that sermon on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage when he ﷺ indirectly informed people that the next year he may not get an opportunity to address the people. Thus the mutual rights of men and women are one of the topics which he selected for discussing towards the close of his life on account of their importance. He wanted his *Ummah* to honour and follow the injunctions in all circumstances.

Mutual relations between husband and wife

This shows the importance of husband-wife relations in human life and how the law-maker the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself felt this importance. If the husband and wife do not discharge each other's rights properly and, instead, usurp these mutual rights, not only will this result in the violation of each other's rights, but it will also adversely affect both

the families as well as the children whose proper upkeep, development, mental and moral growth will be affected. As the family is the foundation of the entire civilisation, with its ruination civilisation is itself ruined. That is why the Prophet ﷺ has laid great stress on the importance of mutual relation between husband and wife.

Women are in your confinement

Hazrat Umr bin al-Ahwas al-Jashim رحمۃاللہ علیہ has narrated that in the Farewel sermon the Holy Prophet ﷺ praised Almighty Allah, offered consels and delivered a speech and then said: Beware! I advise you to do good to women. Accept this advice. This is the sentence which occurred in the previous Tradition. His next sentence was :

فانما هن عوان عندكم

because those women live with you confined in your houses.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned an attribute of women that if man reflects over this attribute only, he can never think of misbehaving with them.

A Lesson from an Ignorant Girl

Our dear Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ used to tell his disciples to learn a lesson from an ignorant, uneducated girl who surrenders herself to a stranger after uttering at the time of the Nikah only two words of acceptance. She honours these two words so solemnly and completely that she leaves her mother, father, brothers and sisters and the entire family and becomes inseparably tied to and confined with her husband. An ignorant girl honours these two words so truly and sincerely that she surrenders herself to one person, her husband but you could not honour

your pledge of these two words by surrendering yourself to Almighty Allah. This girl is much better than you. She honoured so completely her pledge of *Nikah,* but you did not honour your pledge of the two words of the article of Faith.

Sacrifices of the woman for your sake

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in this Tradition, "How tremendous sacrifice the woman has undergone for your sake. If the matter was just the reverse and it were said to you, you would have to leave your family, your parents, after your marriage what an awkward situation it would be for you. As for the woman she has become confined to a strange surrounding, a strange house and a strange person and that, too, for the whole of her life. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said in his tradition: Will you not mind this sacrifice? Do take heed of this and treat her well and with love.

You have no claim upon them

Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ has spoken a very serious sentence of far-reaching consequences. When the meaning of this sentence is explained to men they get annoyed. That sentence is:

ليس تملكون منهن شيئا غير ذٰلك

This means that according to the laws of the *Shari'ah* the only demand you can make of them is that they should live with you in your house. You have no other claim upon them

Cooking is not the duty of a wife

From this Tradition the Jurists have deduced a ruling of delicate nature and which makes men annoyed. The ruling lays down that according to the *Shari'ah* it is not the re-

sponsibility of a woman to cook food for the household. For this purpose the Jurists have divided women into two classes. Women of one class are those who do household work, including cooking food in their parent's houses. The other class consists of women who do not cook food in their father's house where cooks are employed for this work. If after marriage a woman of the latter class goes to her husband's house she is not at all responsible to cook food, religiously, legally, morally or otherwise. On the other hand, that wife may ask her husband to hire a cook for her as man is obliged to provide her with food along with other necessaries of life. The Jurists write:

يأتها بطعام مهيئًا

> It is the responsibility of the husband to provide his wife with cooked food.

The wife cannot be forced to cook food neither by force, nor by the law, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in clear words:

ليس تملكون منهن شيئا غير ذٰلك

> This means: You have a right to keep them in your house which it is not lawful for them to leave without your permission.

With this exception the laws of the *Shari'ah* have imposed no responsibility on them.

However, If she belongs to the first category the one who used to cook food in her parents' house she too is not legally responsible to cook food i.e. she cannot be compelled by law to cook food. However, the responsibility falls on her only morally. In such a case the husband is responsible only to provide the food materials. Even then it is not her responsibility to cook food for the husband and the children. A wife in this class cannot ask her husband

to provide her with cooked food. However, if she refuses to cook food for her husband and the children, the court cannot force her to do it. The respected Jurists have explained these problems at great length.

Serving the In-laws is not obligatory

There is another fact worthy of notice about which much negligence is observed among the people. When a wife is not responsible to cook food for her husband and his children, then she is more appropriately not responsible to cook food for the parents of the husband and his brothers and sisters. A custom has gained currency in our society that the parents of the son think that their right over the daughter-in-law has a priority over the right of the son. Therefore she is bound to serve them, no matter if she serves her husband or not. Such a misleading conception gives rise to quarrels and disputes among the daughter-in-law and other members of the family. The negative results of this conception are obvious to require any comments.

To serve In-Laws is a virtue for a woman

Bear in mind well that it is the responsibility of the son to serve his parents. It is, however, a matter of blessing and virtue for the daughter-in-law if she serves the parents of her husband willingly, as a righteous deed and source of reward for her in the Hereafter. The son does not have any right to force his wife to serve his parents in case she does not feel inclined to serve them of her own sweet will. It is also not lawful for the parents to force their daughter-in-law to serve them. As already mentioned, if the daughter-in-law voluntarily decides to serve her in-laws for the sake of recompense in the Hereafter she is welcome to do so. This will create happy and pleasant at-

mosphere in the household.

Appreciate the services of a daughter-in-law

If a daughter-in-law is serving his father and mother-in-law, she is doing favour out of her moral character because she is giving this service to them only of her free will and she is not in any way liable for such services. Her in-laws should, therefore, appreciate this voluntary service from her. They should try to requite her for this and encourage her. Ignorance of these rights and liabilities create various problems in social life which play havoc to the solidarity and welfare of families through quarrels and disputes. All these troubles are taking place simply because the people have banished from their minds the limits of these mutual rights and liabilities which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has fixed in his Traditions.

A Surprising Incident

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمہ اللہ علیہ one day related a very wonderful event. He said that among his acquaintances, there was a couple who used to visit his assembly and receive spiritual training and instructions from him. One day both of them invited him to a dinner at their house. It was the habit of respected Dr. Sahib to utter at the end of the feast a few words of praise in favour of the lady who cooked the food just to encourage and please her. The lady who had prepared the food came and stood behind the curtain and greeted him. After replying to the greeting Dr. Sahib رحمہ اللہ علیہ uttered a few words of praise and appreciation about the quality and taste of the food and the art of cooking. Dr. Sahib heard the woman sobbing from behind the screen. It was disturbing. Was there anything in Dr. Sahib's words that pinched her? On being asked to state the cause of

her grief and sobbing, she said, "I have been living with my husband for the last forty two years, but during this long period of association I never heard from him a word of appreciation about my cooking. When I heard these words from you sir, I could not control myself from sobbing".

The respected Dr. Sahib used to relate this story in his assemblies off and on to emphasize that such callousness can never be expected from a husband who is able to realize that it is a great favour on the part of his wife that she is serving him so selflessly and faithfully of her own sweet will and is doing all this service for which she has not been made legally responsible by the *Shari'ah*. A man who thinks that his wife is a maid servant and has to serve him at any cost, has no need to drop a word of praise and appreciation if she is an expert cook and sincere worker.

The Husband should serve his parents himself

A question arises as to who should serve the parents when they are old, weak, or otherwise helpless on account of sickness when there is none in the house except their son and his wife? Even in such a situation the daughter-in-law is not bound, according to the *Shari'ah* to serve her in-laws. It is, however, a matter of blessings and virtue for her if she serves them of her own free will with the belief to please Allah and to receive reward in the Hereafter. The son should, however, realise that it is his responsibility to help and serve his parents personally or by employing a servant for this purpose. If the wife is looking his old parents the husband must appreciate this service and be thankful to her.

Husband's permission for going out

But here is another requirement to note in order to understand the true position. After knowing only one side of

a case and being ignorant of the other side people begin to take undue advantage. It has already been explained in detail that it is not obligatory for a wife to cook food, according to the laws of the *Shari'ah*. In his Tradition the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that "women remain confined to your houses like captives". It means that it is not lawful for them, to go out of the house without the permission of their husbands. Just as the jurists have explained in detail the issue of cooking food, in the same way they have also explained in detail that women cannot leave the house for meeting kinsmen, even their parents without the permission of their husbands. If the parents visit the house of their son-in-law to meet their daughter, the husband cannot prevent them from seeing her. The jurists have prescribed limits for such casual visits. The parents may visit their daughter only once a week and go back after seeing her. This is their daughter's right which a husband cannot deny, yet she cannot go out of the house without her husband's permission. Thus Almighty Allah has, in His mercy, created a balance between the rights and responsibilities of husband and wife. On the one hand the wife is not legally bound to cook food and, on the other hand, she is legally bound not to go out of the house without her husband's permission.

Mutual Co-operation is vital for smooth life

Whatever has been stated above is only the legal side of the matter; but the beauty of mutual behaviour with each other is that each should try to please the other. Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا had distributed the duties of the household between them in such a way that Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ did all the outdoor wok, while Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا performed the indoor work. This is exactly the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which should be

followed. Husband and wife should not always involve themselves in the implications of the law. The best way is that both should behave with each other open-heartedly. The division of work between husband and wife on outdoor and indoor basis is a natural division to enable them both to keep the vehicle of life going smoothly.

If she commits the immodesty

اِلَّا اَنْ يَأْتِيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ فَاِنْ فَعَلْنَ فَاهْجُرُوْهُنَّ فِى الْمَضَاجِعِ
وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبَرِّحٍ فَاِنْ اَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلاَ تَبْغُوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيْلاً (ترمذى باب تفسير القرآن فى تفسير سورة التوبه)

If these women commit open lewdness, that lewdness cannot be tolerated in any case. In such a situation they should be dealt with according to the injunction laid down by the Holy Qur'an. First of all they should be admonished, then, if they insist on their sin, let their bed be separated. If they still do not accept the admonition and continue in their lewdness, then it is permitted to inflict them with light beating which should not cause any injury. If they refrain from the lewdness and mend their ways, then one should not find fault with them, but they should be let off, without further pinching them.

اَلَا وحقُّهن عليكم ان تحسنو ا اليهن فى كسوتهن وطعامهن (ترمذى باب تفسير القرآن فى تفسير سورة التوبه)

Beware! These women have rights over you that you behave with them well. Be generous in discharging your obligations in the matter of providing them with clothes, food and their other needs.

This does not mean that you should meet only their basic needs; you are expected to be generous and liberal in supplying their lawful needs.

Pocket money for a wife

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has dealt in his guiding sermons with some topics with special emphasis. I intend to reproduce two or three of these in this discourse, as they are generally overlooked by the people. Firstly, the liabilities about a wife does not mean that she should be provided only with food and clothes. It is also a part of this cost that she should be paid a suitable amount as pocket expenses in addition to the cost of living, making her free to spend this additional amount as she likes. There are persons who arrange for food and clothes but do not care for pocket expenses. Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has said that payment of some amount as pocket money is also necessary, because there are many items when a person feels ashamed to disclose to other that she needs a certain thing. The wife should, therefore, must have some extra amount as pocket money so that she may not seek other means to satisfy her needs. Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has warned that those who do not provide pocket money to their wives are blamable.

Being generous for Family

Another point to note is that one should be generous and liberal in spending money on the needs of the household. One must not limit expenses to basic needs. One should provide money with a generous hand so that the expenses of the household may be met with ease and freedom according to the financial means of the house-keeper. Some people complain that, on the one hand, there is stress that one should not be extravagant and at the same time there are instructions not to be miser in spending money on the household. A question now arises as to what is the line of demarcation between the two. What is extravagance and what is not extravagance?

Simple or comfortable accommodation both are lawful

To remove this confusion Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said: that accomodations are of two kinds, a place which is just enough to accommodate the members of the family. It may be an ordinary hut, it is possible for a man to live some how even in such structures. This is lawful in the first degree. The second kind is that the house should provide living accommodation as well as a reasonable degree of comforts. For example, the house should be concrete-built, equipped with fans and electric lights. If a person provides this service in his house in order to make life easy and comfortable, this cannot be regarded as extravagance.

Decoration is also lawful

In the third degree, along with means of comfort a house should also have some decoration. For example, a man has a concrete built house with plastered walls, electricity and fans, but it has no paint on it. Even an unpainted house like this is fit for living, but without white-washing and proper painting it lacks in decoration. If the house owner gets the house colour washed and painted for the sake of decoration this too is lawful in the laws of the *Shari'ah.*

In short to live in an ordinary house is lawful, it is also lawful to live in a house provided with certain comforts and amenities as well as some decoration. Decoration here means some additional improvement made in the house, like painting, etc, which is pleasing to the eyes and cheering to the heart. There is no harm in this and is permissible in the *Shari ah.*

Show off is not lawful

Then follows the fourth degree which is mere "Show off". The house-owner is doing something which aims neither at comfort, nor at decoration; the aim is to show his riches. Thereby he wants to impose his superiority on others and to show that he is a big thing. All this comes within the definition of "Show off" which is not lawful in the laws of the *Shari'ah.* It is also extravagance.

The limits of extravagance

These four categories also apply to food and clothes, and in all other things of life. A man wears costly clothes in order to receive comfort, to please himself and the members of his household and his acquaintances, friends and visitors, there is no harm. On the other hand there is a person who wears valuable clothes with the intention that he may be considered a rich and wealthy man, a man of exalted position in society, then this is mere exhibition and show and therefore it is prohibited. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has therefore drawn a clear line of demarcation between the two extremes. If money is spent on something for the sake of meeting a necessity, providing comfort or for decoration for his own pleasure and satisfaction, it is not extravagance.

This is not Extravagance

Once it so happened that I was coming back to Karachi from some other city, and it was the hot summer season. I requested someone to have my seat booked in an airconditioned coach and I gave him the required amount of money. Another man who was sitting nearby at once objected to this because in his opinion I was committing extravagance by sitting in an airconditioned coach. Many people are under the wrong impression that to travel in a higher class is extrava-

gance. Bear in mind that if travelling in an upper class is for comfort, e.g., to save oneself from heat in the summer season, and the man can afford it. It is neither extravagance nor a sin. If one travels in an upper class simply to show that he is rich, then it is extravagance and it is unlawful.

The husband should therefore, keep in mind these degrees in meeting the cost of living of his wife with generosity and liberality. Capacity differs from man to man, Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib once observed: There is a man who is all alone in this world, without relatives, without friends and without acquaintances. For such a man a bed, a dish and a jug are sufficient to pass his life. If he collects more articles, it will mean a show and will be reckoned as extravagance in his case. There is a man who receives guests, has a large circle of acquaintances and friends, and has many relatives. The standard of his needs and extent of requirements will be quite different. If such a man has in his house at times even one hundred sets of pots and beddings, not a single piece of this will be counted as extravagance, because all these are necessities of life. The standard of life differs from man to man.

Where to search Allah

Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمۃاللہ علیہ was once a great Ruler but he renounced the world in search of Allah. There are some people who seek from his life arguments to prove their stand. The story runs as follows: One night Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adahm رحمۃاللہ علیہ saw a man walking about on the roof of the palace. Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمۃاللہ علیہ caught him and asked him what he was doing on the roof of the palace. The man replied: I have come here to search my lost camel. Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمۃاللہ علیہ said: Stupid fellow! Are you searching your camel on the roof at this hour

of night? How can you find the camel here? The man asked with some surprise: Can I not find the camel here? Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمه الله عليه answered: certainly not! How can you find the camel on the roof of the palace? The man then retorted: If the camel cannot be found in this palace and the man who is searching the camel in this palace is a fool, how can you find Allah while staying in this palace? If I am a fool you are a greater fool than me. This answer of the stranger shocked the heart of Hazrat Adham رحمه الله عليه. He atonce relinquished his kingdom and took his way to the jungle. He took with him only a bowl and a pillow, so that he might eat food and drink water from the bowl and use the pillow while lying down on the ground. After walking some distance he saw a man drinking water from the river with his palms cupped together. He saw that he could also drink water in that way, so he threw away the bowl and resumed his journey. After walking some distance he saw that a man was sleeping on the ground with his hand placed under the head to serve for a pillow. He felt that he could very well do without the pillow so he threw it away, too.

Emotions should not be followed

After listening to this story some people may misunderstand that keeping a bowl and a pillow is also extravagance. May Allah exalt the rank of Hazrat Thanawi رحمه الله عليه who has at his credit of separating right from wrong and wheat from chaff. He رحمه الله عليه has advised that none should compare himself with those of Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adahm رحمه الله عليه. Firstly, because the change that had come over him was due to an ecstatic state of rapture. A man in this condition should not be followed, because the man so overwhelmed goes out of himself and loses his normal consistency of thought and feeling. We are not, therefore, to follow in

the footsteps of Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمۃاللہ علیہ because he was not at his normal when he decided to leave the palace. Besides such renunciation of worldly relation is not permissible in Islam generally. It would mean that Allah cannot be found in palaces.

Moderate way in spending money

The requirements of one man is different from that of other. The standard of spending also differs from man to man. The standards of a man with low income, and of a man with a moderate income or a man with a high income are different from one another. The liberality in spending of each person should, therefore be proportionate to his income. It should not happen that the husband is a man of moderate means and his wife is asking for items of comforts and luxuries which she sees in the houses of rich men that her husband cannot afford. Demand for such articles of luxury is not lawful. The husband should however, try to meet the demands of his wife as far as possible within his means and should not be niggardly towards his wife.

The rights of the wives over husbands?

عن معاوية بن حيدة رضى الله عنه قال قلت يا رسول الله ماحق زوجة احدنا عليه؟ قال ان تطعمها اذا طعمت وتكسوها ذاكسيت ولا تضرب الوجه ولا تقبح ولا تهجر الافى البيت (ابو داؤد، كتاب النكاح، باب حق المرأة على زوجها، حديث نمبر ٢١٤٢)

(Abu Dawud, the Book of Marriage-chapter on the Right of the wife over her husband, Tradition no: 2142)

Hazrat Mu'awiyah bin-Hidah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that he asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah what are the rights of our wives over us?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: when you take food, feed her also and when you wear clothes, provide her also with clothes to wear. Do not beat her on the face, nor curse her. Do not part with her but only within the (bounds of the) house.

Leave sleeping with her as punishment

As has already been explained, if you ever observe in the wife some lewdness, try first to admonish her. If she does not mind your admonition, then leave her bedding, and sleep on a separate bed. Leaving the bed does not imply that you should go out of the house; you should separate your bedding while remaining in the house. You may, however, change the room by way of a psychological punishment and as a sort of protest, and thus keep yourself aloof from her for some days.

A proper way of separation

The learned jurists have explained the meaning of this Tradition also by advising that on such occasions her bed may be separated, but the talking terms should not be terminated totally. The separation should not be so strict as not to offer salutations to each other from time to time and not to return the greeting if one bids it, nor to avoid answering important questions. A separation of this kind is not lawful.

Wife's permission for a long period journey

While explaining this Tradition the learned Jurists have gone to the extent of saying that it is not lawful for the husband to leave the house for more than four months without the permission and pleasure of his wife. As such, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had promulgated this order throughout his empire that the freedom-fighters who take part in

Jihad should not remain away from their homes for more than four months. The jurists have, therefore, deduced that if anyone is going on a journey for a period not exceeding four months, it is not necessary for him to obtain his wife's permission. If the journey takes longer than four months, it is essential for him to obtain his wife's permission, no matter how desirable that journey may be. This ruling is applicable to the journey for the *Hajj* (Pilgrimages). If the pilgrim returns from the journey within four months no permission from his wife is necessary, but if he prolongs his stay in the Holy city beyond four months the wife's permission must be taken. This ruling is also applicable to journeys undertaken for *Tabligh, Da'wah* and *Jihad.* If the wife's permission is necessary for such blessed journeys then her permission will all the more be necessary for a journey undertaken for the sake of employment, business, etc. If journeys exceeding four months are taken without the wife's permission it will be a violation of her rights and, therefore, unlawful in the laws of the *Shari'ah.*

Who are the Best People?

وعن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اكمل المؤمنين ايمانا احسنهم خلقا وخيارکم خيار کم لا هله. (ترمذی،

كتاب الرضاع، باب ماجاء فى حق المرأة على زوجها، حديث نمبر ١١٦٢)

(Tirmidhi Book of Suckling, Chapter on the rights of a wife over her husband tradition no: 1162)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: The most accomplished of the believers in respect of *Iman* (Faith) is one who is the best of them in conduct and character. The more refined a man is in behaviour and character, the more accom-

plished he is in *Iman* (Faith). Perfect Iman, therefore, demands that a man should behave and deal with others politely. The best of you are those who are the best in their behaviour and dealings with their wives and women.

The meaning of "Good Character" in the modern age

We see that in our days the meanings of things have greatly changed and the values of all things have been reversed. Hazrat Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib Sahib رحمة الله عليه of Deoband used to say: As compared with the past everything has turned upside-down in the present age. For example, in the olden days there was darkness beneath the lamp and now there is darkness above the bulb. Today values have changed and so has changed the import of everything, so much so that even the meaning of character has undergone a total change. Today only some outer acts and expressions of modern etiquettes are regarded as tokens of good character. For example, it is regarded sign of good character to meet someone with a smiling face or to utter formal pleasing words. I am very glad to see you, it is pleasing to meet you, etc. while the heat of enmity, jealousy and hatred is burning in the hearts. Today this way of behaviours has been named good behaviour and character. It has been recognised as an art, how to deal with others so as to make them impressed with our personalities. Books are being written today on the art of winning over sympathies of others. All energies are being utilised to achieve this aim: Do all that is possible to get others attracted by your superficial personality. This is called "character". Bear in mind well that all this formal show has nothing to do with high morality which the Holy Prophet

ﷺ has enjoined upon his followers. This is a mere hypocrisy, ostentation, a trick to attract others to one's own personality. This is nothing but love for honour, fame and regard and this desire, in itself, is a disease and immorality. This has nothing to do with Islamic concept of morality.

Morality is a quality of the Heart

Morals are in fact a particular state of the heart which find expression in the movements of the limbs and the organs. The heart should be filled with the feeling of welfare for the creation of Allah and love for them, irrespective of what they are, friends foes, believers or unbelievers. One should remain alive to the fact that every being on the earth is a creation of His Master, Allah. This originates a kind of love for all in one's heart. This conception, in turn, generates good actions and deeds, and then man does good to others. Now the smile shining on ones face on account of this feeling is not artificial, nor is it displayed to arrest public attention; it rather springs up from the heart as a result of heart-felt longing and emotion. Thus, there is a world of difference between the morals taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the artificial and superficial show of morals in modern society.

How to acquire High Morals?

Only reading books or listening to lectures is not enough to attaint the standard of the desired degree of morals. For this purpose it is imperative to seek the company of some spiritual reformer and guide. The order of *Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism) and the system of becoming a disciple of a spiritual Guide (*Piri-Muridi*) has been handed down from the past men of Allah. It aims at inculcating in high morals and eliminating the germs of immorality from a man. Anyway,

the most accomplished in the realm of *Iman* (Faith) are those individuals who posses high morals, whose hearts generate right motives and these right motives are reflected in their acts and deeds. May Allah admit us all into the company of these perfect personalities *Aameen*!

Do not beat the Maids of Allah

وعن ایاس بن عبد اللہ بن ابی ذباب رضی اللہ عنہ قال قال رسول اللہ صلی اللہ وسلم لا تضربوا اماء اللہ فجاء عمرا لی رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم فقال ذئرن النساء علی ازواجھن...... الخ (ابوداؤد، کتاب النکاح باب فی ضرب النساء، حدیث نمبر ٢١٤٦)

(Abu Dawud, Book of Marriage, chapter on beating women Tradition no: 2146)

Hazrat Iyas bin Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ, while delivering a sermon said: Do not beat the maids of Allah, because beating women is not desirable. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ prohibits something, the act becomes totally unlawful for one who heard the prohibition direct from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Now it is not lawful for him in any circumstances to beat women.

Two kinds of Holy Traditions

It may be noted carefully that there is a category of Traditions which we hear from someone or read in the books. They reach us through a long chain of authorities: giving us the names of the reporters in ascending order carrying to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.The Traditions of this category are called *Zanni* because they reach us through a channel of reporters. It is obligatory to act upon the injunctions con-

tained in such Traditions; and deviating from this is a sin. Traditions which the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم heard direct from the Holy Prophet ﷺ are not *Zanni* (conjectural), but are *Qat-'i* (confirmed). If any one denies such Traditions, not only will he be a sinner, but he will also become an unbeliever. According to the juristic ruling the denier of an order of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at once turns to be an infidel.

Sometimes we entertain the foolish desire in our hearts to have lived at the blessed time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to reap the virtues and blessings of that blessed time. We should remember that whatever Almighty Allah does, He does it in His infinite wisdom and it is He who has raised us in this later age. If He had raised us in the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, who knows what would have happened to us. There is no guarantee that we would not have fallen into the dare ditch of ignorance.? May Allah save us. The question of *Iman* in those days was a very delicate issue. A slight turn from the right path could change the destiny of man.

The devotion with which the sacred Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ rallied round him ﷺ was exclusively their distinction. It was due to this that they reached the unique rank. Allah alone knows what would have been the fate of our selfish far-seeing and ease-loving persons as we are. It is indeed a great favour of Almighty Allah that He saved us from ruin and raised us up in an age in which we enjoy many facilities. We are in an age in which we have *Zanni* Traditions. If anyone denies it he will only be a sinner and not an unbeliever. As regards the sacred Companions, رضی اللہ عنہم if anyone of them heard some Tradition from the Holy Prophet ﷺ and denied it he would instantly become an unbeliever. May Allah save us from such a fate.

The Audacity of the women

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم not to beat their women, this punishment was totally suspended. It was not possible for the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم to continue an act which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had forbidden them to do. Thus when the Practice of beating women ceased then after some time Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and said:

ذئرن النساء علی ازواجهن

O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, these women have now become lions (i.e. fearless and bold) with their husbands. because you have stopped us from beating them. Now none beats his wife, nor does he ever threaten her with that. That is why they have become fearless, are violating their husbands' rights, and are misbehaving with them. So what are we to do now?

فرخص فی ضربهن

Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ permitted them to beat their wives, if they violate their rights and when beating was unavoidable. Only a few days after the restoration of the order of beating, the women began to approach the Holy Prophet ﷺ and complained to him ﷺ that their husbands were taking undue advantage from the permission of beating and were beating them severely.

They are not good men

فقال رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم لقد اطاف بآل محمد نساء کثیر

یشکون ازواجهن لیس اولئك بخیارکم

Mentioning his own name, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Many women are repeatedly viiting the house of Muhammad ﷺ complaining against their husbands' misbeha-

viour with them that they severely beat them. You should note it very carefully that those who resort to this beating are not good men.

It is not the work of good believers to beat their wives. The Holy Prophet ﷺ made it quite clear to the gathering that permission was given to beat their wives as the last alternative only in unavoidable circumstances and subject to the condition that the beating should be light, so as not to cause injury and leave its mark on the body. Despite this, it is the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and also his sincere desire that no man should raise his hand to beat a woman. The mothers of the believers have narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ never raised his hands at any woman. Therefore, this is what the *sunnah* demands.

The Best thing in the world is a "virtuous Woman"

وعن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص رضی الله عنهما ان رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم قال الدنیا متاع وخیر متاعها المرأة الصالحة (صحیح مسلم کتاب الرضاع باب خیر متاع الدنیا المراة الصالحة حدیث نمبر ۱۷٦۸)

(Sahih Muslim. Book of suckling. chapter-the best object of the world. a virtuous woman)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin Al'Aas رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: This world as a whole is an enjoyment, profit and advantage.

The Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

هُوَالَّذِىْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّافِى الْاَرْضِ جَمِيْعًا (سورة البقره: ۲۹)

It is Allah who has created whatever there is in the world for your benefit, enjoyment and for meeting your needs. (Al-Baqarah: 29)

The best of all these objects is a virtuous woman

created for your service and enjoyment. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another Tradition:

حُبب اِلیَّ من دنیا کم النساء والطیب وجعلت قرة عینی فی الصلاة

(کنز العمال، حدیث نمبر ۱۸۹۱۳)

(Kanzul-Umwal, Tradition no: 18913)

Of all the things of your earth there are three things that are dearest to me: (Here note the Phrase "Your earth" as he ﷺ said about his approach this world in these works) viz., a woman, scent, and the coolness of my eyes lies in the prayer.

Thus the foremost among the blessing of the world are these things. In another place he ﷺ said:

مالی للدنیا ما انا والدنیا الاکراکب استظل تحت شجرة ثم راح وترکها (ترمذی، کتاب الزهد، حدیث نمبر ۲۳۷۸)

(Tirmidhi, the Book of Abstinence, Tradition no: 2378)

What have I to do with the world? I am like a rider who takes rest for a short time under the shade of a tree, then he sets off, leaving behind that tree.

Seek refuge from a bad woman

In short one of the three desirable gifts is a virtuous woman, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has sought refuge from bad woman.

اللهم انی اعوذبك عن امرأة تشیبنی قبل المثیب واعوذبك من ولد یکون علیَّ وبالا

O Allah! I seek refuge from that woman who will make me old before I attain the old age. I also seek refuge from a child who proves to be a trial in the Hereafter. May Allah save us from them. ***Aamen***!

So if you are in search of a woman for yourself or

for one of your children, try to find out one who is religious, virtuous and righteous. If God-forbid she is not righteous, then she may prove a distress. If a man is lucky enough to get a virtuous wife, he should value her, and should never degrade her. To value her means that you should fulfil her rights and behave with her nicely.

May Almighty Allah assist us in acting upon these injunctions.*Aameen*!

واخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

And we close with the call that all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Series:10

THE RIGHTS OF A HUSBAND AND HIS STATUS

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 26th June, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

> As Almighty Allah has appointed man a Supervisor of the family, His decision will have to be accepted and acted upon. But you (i.e. women) are at liberty to express your opinion and offer your advice. On the other hand I have ordered man to seek your pleasure, as far as possible and the right to take the final decisions will be his. If the wife wants that she should have the right to take decisions in all matters and man should not pose as Incharge and this status should belong to her, then this is absolutely against nature, wisdom and the dictates of justice. The result of such dispensation will be nothing but destruction of the household.

The Rights of a Husband and His Status

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم لله الرحمٰن الرحيم

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوّٰامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّبِمَآ اَنْفَقُوْا مِنْ اَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللّٰهُ

(سورة النساء: ٣٤)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و نحن علىٰ ذالك من الشٰهدين والشٰكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his Companions رضى الله عنهم. His mercy and blessings in abundance.

Men are the Incharge of women because Allah has made some to excel the other and because they (men) spend of their moneys (for the support of women). So virtuous women are obedient, guarding in absence which Allah has guarded. (4:34)

I believe in Allah. Allah our Great Master has told the truth and His kind Prophet and Messenger has (also) told the truth and we are witnesses to that.

The previous discourse dealt with the rights of a wife

which are due to her by her husband. It contained directions how a husband should behave with his wife. The fact is that the *Shari'ah* which is a law appointed by

Almighty Allah is not partial to anyone but it takes into consideration both sides. and guarantees the good and welfare of both in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Just as the fulfilment of the rights of the wife has been made binding on the husband, in the same way Almighty Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have mentioned the rights of the husband, wife has been made responsible to discharge. The Holy Qur'an and the Traditions both lay great emphasis and stress on the fulfillment of both categories of these rights.

Today every person is demanding his rights

The *Shari'ah* has directed every person to discharge his bounded duties. It has not encouraged any one to demand only his rights. We see that the present day world is a world of struggle for rights. Everyone is demanding his rights through agitation. demonstrations, and by going on strikes. In fact, all possible efforts are being made everywhere in the world and associations have been established for this one-sided objective of attaining Rights, e.g. "The Association for the Protection of Rights of.......". There is no association to ensure the fulfilment of duties and liabilities. None cares to think whether or not he is discharging the duties entrusted to him. The workers and the capitalists both are demanding their rights, but none of them ever thinks how he should discharge his duties and obligations. Husband and wife both are crying for their rights and making frantic efforts to that end. A battle, as it were, is raging on this account. Yet none is seen inclined to consider for a while whether or not he is himself discharging his own duties and liabilities.

Everyone should discharge his duties

The essence of the teachings of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ is that every person should pay attention to the duties entrusted to him and do his best to discharge them. If people begin to discharge their duties the rights of others will automatically get discharged and settled amicably. If a labourer discharges his duties and liabilities will naturally result in the satisfaction of the rights of the capitalist and the employer. Similarly, if the capitalists and the employers discharge their duties the rights of the labourer will be fulfilled. Again, if the husband and the wife discharge their duties to each other their mutual rights will be discharged automatically. What the *Shari'ah* demands of its followers is that everyone should realize his responsibilities and seek to discharge them with sincerity and faithfully.

Mind your own business

Values have changed in a very strange way. Whenever a leader rises to lead others he totally forgets himself and does not search his own heart and actions to discover that he too, may have faults and shortcomings which he should rectify. The Holy Qur'an says:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ (سورة المائدة: ١٠٥)

> O you who believe ! Take charge of your own souls. He who errs cannot injure you if you are rightly guided. (5:105)

The direction contained in this verse advises you to take care of your own selves to find out what duties lie on you, what Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ demand from you, what you owe to the *Shari'ah*, concerning honesty, trust and morality. Discharge your part of obligations and li-

abilities. As for those who are in error and are not discharging their duties, you will not suffer for their misconduct and failure, if you are rightly discharging your own duties.

The style of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

You may be aware that during the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ government officials used to call upon the public to collect *Zakat* (obligatory tax) from them. In those days possessions consisted mainly of cattle including camels, goats, cows, etc. While deputing his officers on this work the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to furnish them with a letter containing instructions as to how they were to discharge their duties. The letter also contained this direction:

”لا جلب ولا جنب فی زکوٰۃ ولا توخذ زکاتھم الافی دورھم“ (ابوداؤد

کتاب الزکوۃ، باب این تصدق الاموال حدیث نمبر (۱۵۹۱)

(Abu Dawood, Book of *Zakat*. chapter - Tasadduqul-Awamal Tradition no: 1591)

This means that the collectors were to collect the amounts of *Zakat* personally at the doors of the people. They should not sit at some place to trouble the people taking their *Zakat* to the collectors. He ﷺ used to advise them as under:

”المعتدی فی الصدقة کما نعھا“ (ابو داؤد کتاب الزکوۃ، باب زکاۃ السائمة، حدیث نمبر ۱۵۸۵)

(Abu Dawood. chapter *Zakat* Tradition no: 1585)

This means that a man who is not honest in collecting the *Zakat,* i.e. he is collecting more amount or quantity (of the animals, etc.) than was due, is committing a sin equal to the sin of the one who is not paying his *Zakat*. This the collectors of *Zakat* are being warned not to wrong the payers by receiving from them even a penny more than the due amount, because if they did they would

be called to account on the Day of Judgment. On the other hand, the payers of *Zakat* were addressed thus:

اذاجاء كم المصدق فلا يفارقكم الاعن رضى (ترمذى، كتاب الزكوة، باب ماجاء فى رضى المصدق، حديث نمبر ٦٤٧)

(Tirmidhi. Book of *zakat* chapter - Tradition no: 647)

The collectors of *Zakat* will visit you. Take care that they do not leave you displeased. You should please them and should not do them anything to make them displeased, because they are in fact my emissaries and representatives. To displease them would be to displease me ﷺ.

Thus, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has reminded each one of his responsibilities and duties. He ﷺ did not incite the payers of *Zakat* to make an agitation against the collectors of *Zakat* that they might not usurp their rights, nor were they advised to form an association which usually becomes a source of contention between the two.

The *Shari'ah* has laid great emphasis on discharging duties honestly because everyone is accountable for every action before Almighty Allah. He should, therefore, prepare himself for giving an account in the Hereafter. The entire philosophy of religion consists in this principle and not that everyone should be demanding his rights from others and should at the same time be unmindful of his own obligations and responsibilities.

How to Regulate one's life

In the matter of mutual relations between husband and wife Almighty Allah and His messenger ﷺ have adopted the same method that they have informed each side of his/her duties which each one should strive to discharge. Life may be compared to a vehicle the two wheels of which are husband and wife. To let this vehicle of life run smooth-

ly it is necessary that each of its wheels, husband and wife, should discharge his/her duties faithfully and be considerate towards the rights of the other, and think her or his rights more than their duties. Such feeling shall bring about stability in life. This aspect is so important and Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are so particular and concerned about the stability and smoothness of human life that the Qur'an and the Traditions are full of injunctions about the duties and responsibilities imposed on man and woman. There is nothing more displeasing to Allah and his Messenger ﷺ than the discord between husband and wife.

Satan's Court

According to a Tradition the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: This Iblis or Satan sometimes places his throne on the surface of the ocean and holds his court there. At that time all his disciples and followers assemble in his court. They are asked to submit their progress report and every disciple submits his report to Satan for his perusal. One disciple submits that he saw a man going to the mosque but he involved him in some work that detained him from the prayer. Satan pleased to hear this but not too much. Another disciple relates a similar story of stopping a Namazi from some worship and Satan is pleased with this too. Such submissions continue until a disciple told Satan that a pair of husband and wife was leading a very happy life with love and co-operation, but he through some schemes, sowed the seed of distrust and conflict between them and they parted with each other. When Satan hears this of creating hate and enmity between couple who were living together in peace and contentment he stands up from his throne with joy and embraces the disciple and acknowledges him as his true representative, because he had performed a feat which none else had done .(Sa-

hih Muslim. Book of attributes of the hypocrites, Tradition no: 3813).

Now you can see how hateful and condemnable in the sight of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are the mutual quarrels, hatred and separation between husband and wife by divorce, etc.! And again how pleasing and blissful the same detestable acts are to Satan! That is why Allah Almighty and His Prophet ﷺ have mentioned in details in the Qur'an and the Traditions rights and obligations of man and woman. If men obey these injunctions, they can reform and rectify their worldly lives as well as their Hereafter.

Man is Incharge over woman

As such Imam Nuwa-wi رحمة الله عليه has framed another chapter under the title "The rights of husband over wife." The Imam has cited under this chapter Qur'anic verses and Traditions and has opened the chapter with the verse:

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ (سورة النساء: ٣٤)

Men are incharge of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other. (4:34)

In other words men are watchmen and look after women. Some have also translated this verse to mean that men are rulers over women. The dictionary meaning of the word "*Qaw-waam*" is a person who is responsible to do or manage some work. Thus, men are incharge over women; they manage their affairs and are their rulers. Here a guiding principle has been provided. Without such a principle man may go on doing wrong in all their affairs misled by a mis-conception. Thus, while describing men's rights the *Shari'ah* has advised women at the very outset about the basic principle that men are protectors and administrators of women's affairs in their lives.

The Propaganda of the contemporary world

In today's world great emphasis is being laid and agitations are launched in support of equality of women with men and their emancipation from man's upper hand. In such an atmosphere people feel ashamed to admit that the *Shari'ah* has made men incharge of women because today full-fledged propaganda is going on that men have imposed their superiority over women. They have been imprisoned under men's hand as helpless subjects and have been declared inferior to men.

While on a Journey choose one of you as a Leader

Man and woman are indeed the two wheels of the vehicle of life. They have both to make the journey of life together. In this journey of life it is very essential that for the sake of management and guidance one of the two should be made leader to manage the whole journey. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Tradition:

> Whenever two men are on a journey together let one of them make the other his leader, irrespective of that the journey is long or short. It is not right for them to undertake a journey without a leader, so that all the policies and the management of the journey in progress may be subject to the decisions of the leader. Without a responsible leader there may be disorder and confusion.
>
> (Abu Dawood, Book of *Jihad*, chapter about appointing a leader. Tradition no: 2608)

When so much emphasis has been laid on appointing a leader on a short journey, why should this emphasis of appointing a leader not apply to this long journey of life which has to be undertaken together, to avoid mismanagement and to ensure a safe and smooth journey ? Thus, it is

imperative to appoint a leader to establish this order.

Who should be the Leader of the journey of life ?

Only two alternatives are open: either the man should be appointed as leader in the journey of life, or the woman should be appointed as leader in the journey of life and the man made her sub-ordinate; there is no third alternative. Now man and woman have been created with distinct physical features. Man is stronger and distinctly more capable of facing the hardship of life than a woman who has been created with tender features. It is, therefore, man alone and not woman, who can discharge rightly and efficiently the duties of this leadership. Instead of relying on one's own wisdom one should better ask Almighty Allah, the Creator as to which of the two should be appointed the leader of the journey. No human judgment, however, wisely made on this issue, can be accepted, except Almighty Allah's infallible judgment. Allah has commanded that man is.. "Incharge, the ruler and manager". If man accepts this divine judgment it will ensure prosperity and success. On the other hand, if man rejects and disobeys this judgment and rebels against it, he is going to ruin his life. In fact, the divine punishment is in progress. Look at the fate of the transgressors!

The conception of a Leader in Islam

Try to grasp the meaning of the word which Almighty Allah has used in His command. He has not used the word *Amir* (leader), *Hakim* (Ruler) or *Badshah* (King). He has used, instead the word *Qaw-waam* (Incharge) which means a person who is responsible for some work and to be responsible means that he will decide upon the overall policy of life. To be a *Qaw-waam* never means that the husband is the master and the wife is his slave girl or maid servant. The relation between

husband and wife is that of a leader and follower, ruler and subject. However, it is not the concept of *Amir* in Islam that sitting on a throne he should be governing his subjects. On the contrary the concept of *Amir* in Islam is that which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has stated:

" سَيِّدُ الْقَوْمِ خَادِمُهُمْ "

The leader of the people is their servant. (Kanzul Umwal Tradition no: 17517)

What an *Amir* (leader) shoud be like ?

My hon'ble father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to relate an incident which is reproduced below in his own words:

Once we were going from Deoband (India) on a journey to some other place. My teacher Hazrat Maulana 'Izaz Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه who was known in Deoband as "Shaikhul Adab" was also accompanying us in the journey. When we reached the Railway Station there was yet some time for the arrival of the train. Maulana 'Izaz Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه said: It is in a Tradition that when you go on a journey, appoint someone your leader, so we too should appoint someone our leader. He being our teacher and we his pupils, I said: We already have an *Amir* with us. Hazrat Maulana asked : Who is he? I replied: You being our teacher and we your pupils, you are the *Amir*. Maulana said: All right, but you will have to obey every order of the *Amir*. because an *Amir* means that he should be obeyed. I said: When we have appointed you our *Amir*, We shall, God willing, obey you in all matters. The Maulana was satisfied. When the train arrived, the Maulana took up some luggage of the companions on his head and some in his hands and moved towards the train. At this, we exclaimed: What are you doing Sir? Let us carry the lug-

gage. The Maulana replied: No when you have appointed me an *Amir*, you will have to obey me. Let me carry this luggage. Thus he loaded the entire luggage into the compartment. Apart from this, during the entire journey; when there was some hard job, Maulana himself did it and when we objected, he would at once say: Look here ! You have appointed me an *Amir* and you will have to obey your *Amir's* orders. So, obey my orders. It turned out to be very hard on us to appoint him an *Amir*. This indeed is the concept of *Amir* in Islam.

An *Amir* (leader) is he who serves others

Today when we conceive in our minds an *Amir*, we conceive him as a King and a Lord who does not tolerate even to talk to his subjects and subordinates. On the other hand, the concept of an *Amir*, according to the Qur'an and the Traditions is that of a person who is a servant and is ready to serve others. The concept of *Amir* is not that he has been appointed a King to issue his commands to others to obey him as his servants and slaves. If an *Amir* issues some command his command will be valid and binding, yet its objective will be their service and to ensure their comfort and welfare only and not a show and exercise of authority.

Husband and wife are friends

Hakimul Ummat Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said: Men are particular in preserving in their minds the Qur'anic verse, "اَلرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ" meaning that men are in-charge and rulers over women. On the basis of this divine command they are domineering upon women and harbouring in their minds the notion that a woman should in all circumstances be obedient and the relation between the two sexes should be that of master and servant; this is indeed

horrible! Almighty Allah has revealed in the Qur'an another verse also which these men do not remember. The verse runs thus:

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖٓ اَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوْٓا اِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَّوَدَّةً وَّرَحْمَةً ؕ (سورۃ الروم ۲۱)

> And it is of His signs that He created for you wives from your own species (i.e. women) so that you may get comfort from them, and He created between you (husband and wife) love and mercy. (30:21)

Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that man is indeed incharge over woman but at the same time the two are on friendly terms with each other. From the administrative point of view man is incharge or a ruler but internally husband and wife are friends. They are not as master and maid servants with each other. They are just like two friends going on a journey and one makes the other a leader of the journey. The husband is, therefore, an *Amir* (Leader), because he is responsible to take decisions on affairs arising during the journey of the entire lifetime. This does not permit him to treat his wife as a maidservant and slave girl. This friendship between husband and wife entails some discipline and demands. Within these discipline and demands there are also some tender emotions of coquetry closeness which do not negate their status as being a controller and the controlled.

Such awe is not needed

Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that there are some persons in our society who are under the impression that they are ruler over their wives, they should be so awe-inspiring that their wives should shudder with fear when

their names are mentioned and should not be able to have conversation with freedom. A class fellow of Maulana once said to him with great pride that when he returned home after many months, his wife and children did not have courage enough to approach him and talk to him. Maulana Sahib asked him: Do you turn into a ravenous animal like a lion or a tiger that your wife or children fear to go near you when you enter your home? He replied: No, this is not the matter, but this is because I am incharge and they should be overawed in my presence. It should be well understood that being incharge never means that wife and children should feel afraid to go near the head of the family and talk to him. There should also be a relation of friendship between them. Read in the following pages what kind of relationship it should be:

The *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا: I become aware of both the occasions when you are pleased and when you are displeased with me. Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا asked: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah, how do you come to know this? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: When you are pleased with me you swear by the name of the Lord of Muhammad" and when you are displeased with me you swear by the name of the "Lord of Ibrahim", without pronouncing my name at that time. In reply to this Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا said:

اِنِّیْ لَا اَھْجُرُ اِلَّا اِسْمَكَ

O Prophet ﷺ of Allah I omit only your name, I do not omit any other feeling. (Sahih Bukhari book of Etiquettes, chapter "It is not lawful to leave the sinner" Tradition no: 6-78)

Now think a while who is being displeased and with

whom? Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا is displeased with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This shows that Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا sometimes used to say something by way of complacency which gave the impression that she had some ill-will and displeasure in her heart - a mater which the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not take to be against his authoritative 'Inchargeship'. On the other hand he ﷺ told her in a very pleasant mood that he could know the occasions of 'Ayeshah's' رضی اللہ عنہا displeasure.

A wife's self esteem

When the charge of a heinous slander was levied against the Mother of the believers, Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا may Allah forgive us, it shocked her as a bolt from the blue; so distressing it was! The Holy Prophet ﷺ himself was shocked with deep grief that such an undesirable rumour had spread among the people. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا:

O 'Ayeshah, look here! You need not be so sad. If you are innocent, Allah will surely disclose your innocence. On the other hand, if you have committed - God forbid - Some fault or sin, then turn to Allah in repentance. He shall pardon you.

Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا felt it too shocking for her that the Holy Prophet ﷺ should have spoken these words: If you are innocent Allah will surely disclose your innocence. On the other hand, if you have committed some fault or sin, then turn to Allah in repentance. This shows that there was some slight suspicion in his ﷺ heart about the possibility of this sin. On account of a very great shock which she had from this speech she lay down and in this very state the verses exonerating her were revealed. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ was also present on that occasion. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was also overjoyed to listen to those verses. Hazrat Abu

Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ also was very happy and he said that God willing, the entire calumny would come to an end. He said to Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا: Receive the glad tidings that Almighty Allah has revealed verses to exonerate you. Get up, stand up before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and salute him. Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا was lying on her bed. listened to the verse of exonerating and said. while still lying: It is Allah's mercy that He has revealed my innocence. I. therefore. want to thank none. but Allah. because you (both) had allowed a suspicion to enter your hearts about a possibility of my having committed a sin. (Sahih Bukhari. the Book of Tafasir of Surah An-Noor. chapter Lau laa.... Tradition no: 750).

Apparently Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا avoided standing before the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not take it ill because this was matter of feminine self-esteem which emanated from Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا.

It should be noted that this practice of self-esteem is a natural demand of love and friendship. Thus. the relation between husband and wife is not only that of authority and subordination but also of friendship and love. Friendship rightly demands that the play of such feminine coquetry should be tolerated with masculine patience and generosity. It is, however. quite a different matter that in very extreme cases of misconduct the Holy Prophet ﷺ expressed his anger. He ﷺ has. however, always tolerated such behaviours.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to please the wife

This is how the Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed the demand of friendship. The Holy Prophet ﷺ enjoyed a very elevated rank and status with Almighty Allah with his close contact, and the unique privilege of conversation with Him. Yet he ﷺ at all times tried to please his sacred wives, sought to keep them heartily happy and satisfied, and behaved with

them most amicably. An example of this amicability on his part was that one night he related to Hazrat ʻAyeshahرضی اللہ عنہا the story of eleven women of Yaman. He told her how these women decided among them that they would disclose to one another the true conducts and characters of their husbands. They depicted the true conditions of their husbands in the most eloquent, chaste and lucid language. He ﷺ related this story for the sake of Hazrat ʻAyeshahʻs رضی اللہ عنہا pleasure. (Shamail Tirmidhi, chapter on the prophet's night-talk).

Bantering with wife is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

One day the Holy Prophet ﷺ was staying at the house of Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا as it was her turn Hazrat ʻAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا prepared a sweet dish for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and brought it to Hazrat Sawdah's house and placed the dish before the Prophet ﷺ. She asked Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا sitting in front, to take some from the dish. Hazrat Sawdah was annoyed at it. Because it was her turn. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا refused to take the sweet. Thereupon Hazrat ʻAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا insisted upon Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا to eat the sweet or otherwise she threatened that she would smear Sawdah's face with it. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا again refused to eat it. Then Hazrat ʻAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا took a small amount of the sweet and rubbed it on Hazrat Sawdah's رضی اللہ عنہا face. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا complained to the Holy Prophet ﷺ against this behaviour of Hazrat ʻAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

وَجَزَآءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا

The reward of an ill is an ill the like thereof. (42.40)

In other words if anyone misbehaves with you, you may also misbehave with him in retaliation. The Holy

Prophet ﷺ, therefore, asked Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا to take her revenge from Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا by rubbing the sweet on her face. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا did this. Now both the wives رضی اللہ عنہما had the sweet on their faces. All this happened before the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

In the meantime there was a knock at the door. On inquiry it came to knowledge that Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was there (probably the *Hijab* (veil) had not been enforced by that time). On hearing this the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the two wives to wash their faces, because Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had arrived there. They, therefore, washed their faces.(Majmauz-zawaid-Haishmi, vol. iv p.316)

The Prophet ﷺ who was constantly in communion with Allah, was continuously in conversation with Him and revelation was descending down: it was indeed a personality that enjoyed the privilege of presence before Allah which none else enjoyed on the surface of the earth. Despite all this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ cared so much for the happiness and pleasure of his sacred wives رضی اللہ عنہ.

The Station of the "Presence" before Allah

We all utter the word "Presence", but do not know what is its real impart. If anyone ever had the taste of this 'Presence', then only he could realize what it is. Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ a spiritual leader in Pakistan used to say that sometimes the idea of "Presence" (before Allah) so thoroughly overtakes some servants of Allah that they cannot lie down or sleep with their legs stretched. That is because they are constantly absorbed in a feeling that they are in the presence of their Creator, Allah, and indeed how can one lie down with his legs stretched before an elder and far superior to him? He can never do so. Thus how can a person who enjoys such an exalted and rare status of

"Presence" afford to joke with his wife. It is only a Messenger of Allah who can enjoy this unique privilege. Nevertheless, as Almighty Allah has conferred on man the status of an "incharge" or a ruler over women, his decisions will have to be obeyed. It is, however, open to women to offer their opinions; and Allah has indeed enjoined upon men to please their wives as far as possible. If a house-lady does not keep this in view and wants to impose her decision on her husband in all affairs and become a ruler in place of her husband, then this is against nature, the *Shari'ah* wisdom and justice. The result of such an attitude on the part of housewives can lead to a total ruin of the household.

The Responsibilities of women

Allma Nuwa-wi رحمة الله عليه has further stated, quoting a verse of The Holy Qur'an:

فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللّٰهُ ط

So virtuous women are obedient, guarding in secret what Allah has guarded. (4:34)

In the explanation of this verse the Allamah has said that it is the duty of virtuous women to be obedient (*Qaa-ni-tah*) to Allah, obedient to their husbands in the matter of the rights which are due by them to their husbands and to guard the houses of their husbands in their absence. Almighty Allah has mentioned it among the essential attributes of women. He has entrusted to them the duty of guarding the houses of their husbands when the latter are away from their houses. Guarding the houses means firstly to guard their own honour and chastity and guard the money and properties of their husbands, because, the duties of guarding these value rests on wives. This is confirmed in a Tradition:

المرأة راعية في بيت زوجها (صحيح بخاری، کتاب الجمعة، باب الجمعة في القرى والمدن رقم ۸۹۳)

(Sahih Bukhari. the Book of Friday chapter. Tradition no: 893)

A wife is the protector of the house of her husband, i.e. it is her responsibility to protect the money and property of her husband.

Under most circumstances it is not binding on a wife to prepare food, but she has been made responsible to protect the money and property of her husband in such a way that they may not be squandered. The Holy Qur'an has appointed this act of guarding as her essential responsibility:

The life cannot be based on the Laws only

It has been explained that preparation of food does not fall within the responsibilities of a wife. But this is a matter of legal technicality. It is, however, not possible to lead meaningful life under the duress of dry laws. Just as wife is not responsible legally to prepare food, in the same way a husband is not responsible legally to provide medical treatment to his wife if she falls ill. It is also not the legal responsibility of the husband to take his wife to the house of her parents to see them. nor is it necessary to welcome to his house the parents of the wife when they visit their daughter. The jurists have gone to the extent of ruling that the wife's parents can see their daughter only once in a week, see her from a distance only and then go back. The husband is not responsible to welcome them into the house and offer them seats to sit and see their daughter. If life is confined within the thorns of the law, the household of both will be doomed. The wheels of life will run smoothly only when both pass their lives according to the Traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and follow in the footsteps of the sacred wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

Wife should take care of her husband's possessions

Hazrat Maulana Thanawi has stated in his sermons that it is among the duties of a wife to take care of the money of her husband that it may not be wasted and squandered lavishly. If a wife is careless in this matter then she frustrates the requirements of her legal obligations.

The Angels curse such a wife

عن ابی هريرة رضی الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلی الله عليه وسلم اذا دعا الرجل امرأته الی فراشه فابت ان تجئ لعنتها الملائكة حتی تصبح (صحیح بخاری کتاب النکاح باب اذاباتت امرأة مهاجرة فراش زوجها حدیث نمبر ۵۱۹۳)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Nikah. chapter women remaining away.... Tradition no: 5193

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When a husband calls his wife to his bed for intercourse but she does not obey the call or behaves with her husband in such a way that the husband is displeased, then the Angels curse such a woman the whole night till dawn.

Cursing means that the woman will not receive Allah's mercy that night. This is because in spite of so many rights which the wife enjoys from the side of the husband, she fails to safeguard the chastity of the husband so as to prevent him from falling into some undesirable desires. The basic object of marriage is to provide safeguard against lewdness. If the wife fails to provide this safeguard the Angles must curse her.

Another Tradition

اذا باتت المراة مهاجرة فراش زوجها لعنتها الملائكة حتى تصبح

(حواله بالا، حديث نمبر ٥١٩٤)

(Preceding reference to Tradition no: 5194)

If a woman passes the night away from the bed of her husband, the Angels curse her until dawn.

Now just consider how a small matter has been mentioned in the Tradition that if the wife fails in satisfying her husband's call for intercourse or to disappoint him in any other way, then she is cursed the whole night. Similarly if a wife leaves her husband's house without his permission, then the Angels of Allah curse her until her return. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained all these matters one by one in all details, because negligence in these matters may lead grave consequences.

No optional fasting without husband's permission

وعن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لايحل للمرأة ان تصوم وزوجها شاهد الا باذنه ولا تاذن فى بيته الا باذنه (صحيح بخارى كتاب النكاح باب لاتاذن المرأة فى بيت زوجها حديث نمبر ٥١٩٥)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Nikah, Tradition no: 5195)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه has narrated that Holy Prophet ﷺ said: It is not lawful for a wife to observe optional fast in the presence of her husband except with his permission. Great virtues have been mentioned in the Traditions for optional forms of worship, but a wife cannot observe them without the permission of her husband, because this may be a source of inconvenience to him. However, it is not like a good husband to prevent his wife from optional worship, unless it is unavoidable. He should be

liberal in according permission as far as possible. Undue strictness in this matter leads to tension and bitterness. Husband and wife both should adopt a flexible attitude in this matter. However, if the husband does not permit his wife to observe optional fasts, she should not insist on it and obey her husband because obedience to the husband has preference to the optional fasting.

This shows that Allah and His Prophet ﷺ prefer husband's obedience over all optional forms of worship. So the virtuous reward which a wife will earn by obeying her husband will be much more than that from the optional fasting. The wife should not misunderstand that she has been deprived of the virtue of fasting. She should think that she wanted to observe fasts only to earn reward of the Hereafter and to please Allah. On the other hand Allah has said that He shall not be pleased with a wife unless the husband of that wife is pleased with her. Thus, a wife can earn the same reward by eating and drinking which she could earn by observing the fasts. only if she pleases her husband.

Reward for doing Household work

Sometimes we are led to think that the husband and wife relation is only a worldly affair and a source of satisfying a sensual appetite. This is not correct. It is purely religious matter. If a wife is able to understand that Almighty Allah has imposed on her a duty and the aim of this husband-wife relation is to please the husband and through his pleasure to please Almighty Allah, then this entire affair becomes a source of virtuous reward. The housewives are busy doing household work the whole day from morning till evening. If they do all this with the intention of pleasing their husbands then all this work is recorded in their accounts as worship, whether the work consists of cooking

food looking after the house, brining up the children, minding the comforts and needs of the husband or pleasing the husband with an amicable and warming style of conversation. All these actions are rewarded in the Hereafter with divine favours, only when these are done with pure and sincere intention.

Virtuous Reward for satisfying the sexual desire

There is a definite and clear Tradition on this subject. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that Almighty Allah grants recompense on the mutual contacts between husband and wife. The Holy Companions رضی اللہ عنہم asked: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah, man does this only to satisfy his sexual desire; how can it fetch him a reward? The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Will not man commit a sin if he satisfies this desire with unlawful means? The Companions said. Yes, Prophet ﷺ of Allah. it will indeed be a sin. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then said: The husband and wife satisfy their sexual desires in a lawful way, by shunning the unlawful ways, in compliance with Allah's injunctions so they shall receive reward for this action as well. (Musnad Ibn Hambal. vol. 5. p. 169167)

Almighty Allah looks at both with Merciful Eye

There is a Tradition which Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has quoted in many places in his writings and sermons, although I myself have not seen it. The Tradition mentions that if a husband on entering his house casts a glance of love on his wife and the wife also responds with similar glance on her husband Allah also looks at them with mercy. Therefore, the husband-wife relation is not only a worldly affair. They are source of happiness or distress in the Hereafter.

According to a Tradition in the Tirmidhi Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated: To compensate the fasts which I missed in the month of Ramadan on account of natural period I used to observe compensatory fasts generally during the month of next *Sha'ban*, i.e. after the lapse of eleven months. I followed this practice because the Holy Prophet ﷺ also observed fasts on most days in the month of *Sha'ban*. Fasting in the month of *Sha'ban* was better because the Holy Prophet ﷺ also used to fast in most of the days of *Sha'ban*. Although these were not optional fasts but obligatory fasts of Ramadan. Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا postponed these fasts for such a long time to avoid inconvenience to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Sahih Muslim. Book of Siyam, Chapter Qaza Ramadan in Sha'ban Tradition no: 11466).

A wife should not allow a stranger into the House

The next sentence of this Tradition is:

ولا تأذن فی بیته الاباذنه

It means that it is also an obligatory duty of the wife that she should allow none to enter her husband's house without his permission, nor should she allow a person to enter the house whom the husband does not like. It is strictly forbidden for a wife to allow anyone to enter the house at her own option. The same point has been emphasized in greater detail in another Tradition:

الاان لکم علی نسائکم حقًاولنسا ئکم علیکم حقًا فحقکم علیهن ان
لا یوطین فرشکم من تکرهون ولا یأذن فی بیوتکم لمن تکرهون

(ترمذی کتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فی حق المراۃ علی زوجها حدیث نمبر ۱۱۶۳)

(Tirmidhi, The Book of suckling. chapter about the wife's rights over her husband. Tradition no: 1163)

You should remember that you have some rights

over your wives and your wives have some rights over you, i.e., both have some rights over each other. It is necessary for each side to fulfil and protect the rights of the others. What are those rights? They are: O men your rights over your wives are that they should not allow those persons to use your bed whom you dislike, nor should they allow those persons to enter your houses whose entry you dislike. Here two rights have been mentioned:

(1) It is binding on the wife not to allow a person to enter the house whose entry the husband dislikes. This applies even to such person as may be close relatives of the wife. The parents are allowed to visit the house only to have a look at their daughter. The husband cannot stop them from this, but it is not lawful for them to stay in the house without the permission of the husband, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has asked them in clear words not to allow the entry of undesirable persons whoever they may be.

(2) The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also advised that the wives should not allow those persons to use the bed of their husbands whom their husbands do not like. It includes sitting, lying down, and sleeping on the bed of the husband.

The Islam of Hazrat Umme Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا

The mother of the believers, Hazrat Umme-Habeebah (RAA) is one of the sacred wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The history of the Holy Companions رضی اللہ عنہم is fraught with guidance. Hazrat Umme-e-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا is the daughter of Hazrat Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہا who spent about twenty-one years in opposing the Holy Prophet ﷺ and took parts in battles against him ﷺ. He was one of the leaders of Makkah and embraced Islam on the occasion of the victory of Makkah and thus became a Companion. It is a manifestation of the omnipotence of Almighty Allah that Hazrat Umme-Ha-

beebah رضی الله عنها the daughter of such a great infidel leader, and her husband both embraced Islam, while her father was engaged in opposing and resisting the Muslims. The Islam of his daughter and son-in-law greatly displeased Abu Sufyan and he was not able to tolerate their conversion to Islam. He was, therefore, always taking all possible steps to torment them. At that time many Muslims, compelled by the cruel treatment of the unbelievers, had migrated to Abyssinia and Hazrat Umme-Habeebah and her husband were also among the Muslim migrants. They both lived there. Strange are the ways of Almighty Allah! After sometime Umme-Habeebah dreamt that the face of her husband had altogether changed and distorted. When she awoke she feared lest something untoward should happen to the faith and religion of her husband. After the lapse of a few days the meaning of that dream was revealed. Her husband used to visit a Christian on account of which he lost his Islamic faith and turned a Christian. This mishap struck Hazrat Umme-Habeebah as a bolt from the blue. For the sake of Islam she left her parents, her homeland and all her dear ones and settled in this foreign land, and the only sympathiser and helper, her husband, turned a Christian. It was like a doomsday for her. After sometime her husband died in this condition and she remained all alone with none to look after her.

Her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ received the sad news in Madinah that her husband had become Christian and died as such and Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی الله عنها was left all alone in a foreign land. In this state of her loneliness and helplessness the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent a message to the King of Abyssinia, Negus, to convey to Umme-Habeebah رضی الله عنها the Prophet's proposal of marriage with her. The

message was conveyed to her through Negus.

Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی الله عنها herself relates her story:

"One day I was sitting in the house alone when someone knocked at the door. When I opened the door I found a maid standing there. I asked her, "From where have you come?" She replied: "Negus the King of Abyssinia has sent me to you (This is the same Negus who had believed in the Holy Prophet ﷺ and embraced Islam) I again asked her, "Why has he sent you to me?" She replied, "He has sent me to you because Hazrat Muhammad, the Prophet ﷺ of Allah has sent through King a proposal of his marriage with you." Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی الله عنها says that when the words of the proposal entered her ears she was struck with surprise as well as happiness to such an extent that she gave the maid in return for the glad news whatever she had with her at that time. Thereafter both were married, while Hazrat Habeebah رضی الله عنها was in Abyssinia and the Holy Prophet ﷺ was in Madinah. After sometime the Holy Prophet ﷺ made necessary arrangements to bring her back to Madinah. (Al-Isabah fee Tameezis. Sahabah. vol. 4. p. 298 Ramlah).

The Reasons for the Prophet's Multi-Marriages

It is a fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ married many wives to which ignorant and evil-disposed people raise objections. It is, however, also a confirmed fact that at the back of every marriage lies some marvelous wisdom. Look at the wisdom at the back of this marriage. In what a pitiable condition Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی الله عنها was living in Abyssinia, no one to help or look after her. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not sympathised with her what would have happened to her? After marrying her in this deplorable condition, he ﷺ called her back to Madinah.

Non-Muslims extol this

It is also a marvelous event and miracle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that after the Prophet's marriage with Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا, when the news reached Hazrat Abu Sufyan in Makkah, and he was then an arch-enemy of Islam and of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and an infidel, the following words spontaneously escaped from his mouth:

This is a happy news, because Muhammad ﷺ is not among those men whose proposal can be turned down. It is indeed a matter of good luck that she has gone there.

Breach of Agreement

At Hudaibiyah a treaty of truce was signed between the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Sufyan the full details of which are available in history books. Abu Sufyan and other infidels abided by the conditions of this treaty for one year only. Thereafter, they began to violate those conditions. In consequence the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared that he was no longer bound to abide by the treaty and as such he ﷺ could attack the Holy Makkah as and when he wished. When his enemies did not honour their covenant he ﷺ too was not bound to honour it. After this declaration Hazrat Abu Sufyan feared that the Holy Prophet ﷺ could attack the Holy Makkah at any time.

You are not fit for this Bed

Once Hazrat Sufyan was returning from Syria, the Muslims arrested him and his caravan. Hazrat Abu Sufyan, however, managed some how to enter the Holy city of Madinah secretly. He did this with the idea that his own daughter was in the house of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and would talk to him ﷺ and might thus secure his release: He, therefore, secretly entered the house of Hazrat

Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا, his daughter welcomed him. When he entered the house the bedding of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was lying spread and Hazrat Abu Sufyan wanted to sit on it. Seeing this Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا quickly went ahead, rolled up the bedding and kept it aside. (Hazrat) Abu Sufyan was very much astonished at this action of his own daughter and said:

> Ramlah! Is this bedding not worthy of me or am I not worthy of this bedding?
>
> Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا replied:
>
> My dear father! The truth is that you are not worthy of this bedding. It is the bedding of Muhammad the Prophet of Allah ﷺ and I cannot allow in my life a *Mushrik* (Idolater) to sit on this bed.
>
> (Hazrat) Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہا said in reply:
>
> Ramlah! I little knew that you would become so changed that you would not allow even your own father to sit on this bed.

This action of Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا that she did not allow even her own father to sit on the bed of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was in accordance with this Tradition: "لایوطن فرشکم من تکرھون" your wives should not allow such persons to use your bedding as you do not like. (Al-Isbah Tameezis-Sahabah vol. IV, p. 298 Ramlah).

The wife should approach her husband willingly

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: a husband calls his wife for his desire she must come to him even if she is in a kitchen.

وعن طلق بن علی رضی اللہ عنہ ان رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

قال" اذا دعا الرجل زوجته لحاجته فلتأته وان کانت علی التنور"

(ترمذی کتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فی حق الزوج علی امرأة حدیث نمبر ۱۱۶۰)

(Tirmidhi. Book of suckling - Haqqul Zauj 'alal-mirati Tradition no: 1160)

Hazrat Talaq bin Ali رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When the husband calls his wife for his need, it is binding on the wife to go to him at once, even if she is busy at the oven (baking bread). That is she should not refuse to respond to the husband's call even in such critical moments.

Marriage is the Lawful way of satisfying sexual desire

Almighty Allah has created in every man and woman a natural desire of sexual satisfaction and He has prescribed for the satisfaction of this natural desire a lawful way and that way is the institution of marriage. Amicable relations between husband and wife are most important in the fulfilment of this natural demand. That is why through His many commands and injunctions Allah has opened all the lawful ways for the satisfaction of this natural instinct and desire, so that no man and no woman may ever think of taking resort to unlawful ways to satisfy this desire. Husband and wife must cooperate with each other in the satisfaction of this desire, so that none may be induced to look to someone else for this purpose in violation of Allah's commands.

Marriage is an easy matter

That is why Allah has made it very easy to establish a matrimonial relation. It requires only the presence of two (man and woman) and two witnesses is necessary. The man and the woman agree before the two witnesses to accept each other as wife and husband and that is all. The marriage stands finalised. It is not necessary even to recite the matri-

monial recitation – it is only a *Sunnah*. It is also not necessary that this simple rite should be performed by a Qazi (a professional official to solemnise marriage) or any other person. It is also a *Sunnah* if a third person, say a Qazi, does the job.

If before two witnesses one of the couple says: "I married you" and the other says, "I accepted the offer of marriage", the marriage stands solemnised. Neither it is necessary to go to mosque nor is it necessary to have a person as an intermediary. The lawful way of marriage in Islam has been made so simple!

A Blessed Marriage

It has also been ordained that the marriage ceremony and formalities must be very simple and easy. No observance of customs, no special conditions and no elaborate and pompous celebrations are necessary. According to a Tradition once a son or daughter comes of age the parents should arrange their marriage so that they may not feel the need of taking an unlawful course and the lawful course may become easy for them to follow. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Tradition:

ان اعظم النكاح بركة أيسره مؤنةً

The best marriage is one which is very simple and easy.

The more a marriage ceremony is extended with various rites and pomp and show the lesser shall be the blessings in it.

The marriage of Hazrat ʿAbdur Rahman bin ʿAuf رضى الله عنه

Hazrat ʿAbdur Rahman bin ʿAuf رضى الله عنه is a companion of high dignity and one of the ten Promised of Paradise,

viz., those companions whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had given in their lifetime the glad tidings of Paradise. Once when he came to the meeting of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the prophet saw on his shirt a yellow stain. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ inquired from him about the coloured spot, he said:

O messenger of Allah ﷺ, I have married a woman and at the time of the marriage I had applied scent, and this is the stain of the scent. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

بارك الله لك وعليك أُوْلم ولو بشاةٍ (صحيح بخارى، كتاب البيوع، باب "فاذاقضيت الصلاة فانتشروا" حديث نمبر ٢٠٤٨)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of purchases, Tradition no: 2048)

"May Allah grant you blessings in it. Arrange a matrimonial feast (*Walimah*), even it is with one goal only."

The point to be noted in this Tradition is that Hazrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf رضی اللہ عنہ is one of the ten Promised of Paradise and a most closely associated companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, yet not only he did not invite the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to the marriage ceremony, but he did not also even inform him ﷺ of the marriage. He informed the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the time of answering his ﷺ question about the coloured spot on his shirt. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not complain to him that he ﷺ was not invited to the marriage. This is because the Islamic *Shari'ah* has prescribed no conditions and restrictions for marriages.

We have made marriage a problem

Once Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and told him: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! I have married a woman. (Sahih Bukhari, Tradition no: 5079)

Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ a was closely associated companion and he was frequently in his ﷺ company, yet he did

not invite the Prophet ﷺ to the marriage ceremony, because in the Prophet's time it was a general custom that no special formalities were observed on the occasion of marriage, as is done in these days. Preparations are made from months ahead and the entire family is engaged in various activities. Without these a marriage is considered to be impossible. With our meaningless, rather undesirable customs and useless formalities we have made marriage a difficult and expensive venture. The *Shari'ah* with its injunctions has made it simple and inexpensive. With the result that girls are sitting in their parents houses without marriage growing over age, because their guardians are not in a position to afford dowry, magnificent celebrations in stately marriage halls. In collecting money for this purpose the difference between lawful and unlawful is totally ignored. We have given up the *Sunnah* of marriage and have, instead, adopted the ways of the Hindus and the Christians. Large amounts of money are needed to arrange a marriage and they can hardly be procured through lawful means. Film shows are going on in the houses day and night on the TV which mostly excite evil passions and deform the morals of the youth. If you go out in the markets your eyes will hardly meet any scene of temperate nature. As a result of this curses of obscenity, nakedness, shamelessness are gaining currency in society. These un-Islamic customs and formalities have driven our society to the brink of ruin.

The Dowry is a curse on our Society

With regard to this evil the responsibility mainly devolves on those families that are well-fed well-to-do, rich and wealthy. The society cannot get rid of this curse unless the wealthy, the well-to-do and the rich people resolved to

take practical steps to perform marriages in their families with simplicity and do away with the useless and wrong customs. A poor man is compelled by the prevailing trends that he has to go through all these vicious and expensive formalities to maintain his apparent social position. If dowry is not provided the in-laws will taunt the girl her lifetime for lackness. Today dowry is considered as an essential part of marriage. The burden providing the couple with the household necessities which should fall on the shoulders of the bride-groom has now been thrown on the weak shoulder of the bride's father. As if the grief and shock of parting with his dear daughter for good was not enough to break the nerves of the girls' father that he is made to bear the liability of lack of rupees to provide furniture, etc. To furnish another's house. There is no justification for such things in the *Shari'ah*. It is all right if some father wants to give his daughter anything: he can do so quietly and with simplicity without making a demonstration of the gifts.

In the end it may be repeated that if the rich classes of the society do not launch a campaign to eradicate these evils first from their own circles and show the path of simplicity to the less privileged classes, this curse cannot be eradicated from our society. May Allah infuse the truth in our hearts by His mercy. *Aameen.*

The husband's dignity

وعن ابی هریرة رضی اللہ تعالی عنه عن النبی صلی اللہ علیه وسلم قال

”لو کنت آمُر احدا ان یسجدَ لاحد لَاَ مرت المرأة ان تسجد لزوجها“

(ترمذی کتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فی حق الزوج علی المرأة حدیث نمبر ۱۱۵۹)

(Tirmidhi, Book of Suckling Chapter right of husband over wife, Tradition no: 1159)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنه has reported the

Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying: If it had been lawful for me to command a person to prostrate before a person I would have commanded a woman to prostrate before her husband. As it is unlawful for any person to bow down before any other person, I cannot give this command before anyone but Allah.

This is an attachment between two hearts

In the journey of life where men and women are journeying together Allah has appointed the man an Incharge and a guardian. Except for this rank, all other ranks are short lived and temporary. Today a man is incharge, ruler or king but this rule and kingship is for a limited and appointed time. Yesterday he was an incharge and ruler, today he is in a jail; yesterday he was a king but today he is not worth a penny. These positions of rulership and kingship are only transitory. What is in existence today will perish and vanish tomorrow. As against this the attachment between husband and wife is a lifelong attachment, a continuous companionship, inseparable even for a single moment. The authority which a man wields lingers till death or till the validity of the marriage. This special authority or rank is, therefore, quite different from the commonly known authorities. In other authorities the attachment between the ruler and the ruled, the King and the subjects is only a formal, conventional and legal attachment, but this is not the case with the attachment existing between husband and wife. It is a welding together of two hearts, a fusion of two hearts whose effects encompass the entire lifetime. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If I were to order anyone to prostrate before any person I would order a woman to bow down before her husband, because he is the leader of the wife's life-journey.

The most beloved personality

It is the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he draws the attention of every person to his bounden duties. When he ﷺ addressed the husband he stated all the rights of the wife, one by one. Now when he is addressing the women her attention is being drawn to her duties and she is advised to note well that the most honourable and beloved personality for her on the surface of the earth after Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ is her own husband, and that she cannot do full justice to the rights of and obedience to her husband unless she fully understands the truth. However, there is no denying the fact that the commands of Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have preference and priority over all other things. When the question of obeying commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ arises the commands to obey father, mother and husband are ignored. The status of the husband comes next to that of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. So, try to please him, pay the dues of his rights and obey him.

Modern Civilisation has reversed Everything

Today all things have taken an apposite course. Hazrat Qari Muhammad Tayyib رحمہ اللہ علیہ of Deoband (India) used to say that in modern civilisation everything has been reversed, so much so that in olden times there used to be darkness below the lamp but now there is darkness over the electric bulb.

Attending to the household affairs may not be an obligatory duty for women in the Shari'ah but it is surely a *Sunnah* (practice) of Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا who used to do all the work of her house herself and with her own hands. Apart from this a woman has also been commanded to obey her husband. As such, if a woman does

her household work cooks food for her husband and children, she is entitled to great rewards from Almighty Allah. But the concept of today's perverted civilisation is that a women's abiding within her house and performing the household duties is retrogression backwardness. What is happening today? A woman works as an air hostess serves food to four hundred passengers, stands before them with a tray decorated with drinks and food. She becomes the target of thirsty and greedy gazes of four hundred men. Each passenger on the aeroplane takes from her a different service, sometimes calling her for nothing but only for lustful enjoyment and armorous exchange of words. The meaning of all this in the lexicon of modern civilisation is freedom and emancipation of women. If the same woman provides the same services to her husband, children, brothers and sisters, it is termed as being out of fashion and regarded as opposed to advancement and progress.

If the same woman is working in a hotel as a waitress and serving customers day and night with food and drinks she is an emblem of emancipation of women. It is her freedom if she becomes a secretary or a stenographer of some officer, but if the same woman does the same work within the bounds of her house for her husband, children and parents, this is considered to be out dated style of life:

خرد کا نام جنوں رکھ دیا جنوں کا خرد
جو چاہے آپ کا حسن کرشمہ ساز کرے

You have named wisdom insanity; And named insanity wisdom,; Your wonder causing beauty is at liberty to do whatever it likes.

The Responsibility of a woman

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that it is not obligatory for a woman to serve any individual of the

world. She is free from all burdens and all responsibilities, except that she should stay peacefully in her own house, obeying her husband, and bringing up her children with care and love. This is her bounden duty and thereby she would be building the nation and she would be its architect. This is the place of honour which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has granted to a woman. Now it is up to her to choose between the place of honour or the place of disgrace.

Woman entering Paradise directly

وعن ام سلمة رضى الله تعالىٰ عنها قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " أيما امرأة ماتت و زوجها عنها راض دخلت الجنة " (ترمذی

كتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فی حق الزوج علی المرأة حديث نمبر ١١٦١)

(Tirmidhi, the Book of suckling. chapter on the rights of a husband..... Tradition no: 1161)

Hazrat Umme Salmah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If a woman dies in a state that her husband is pleased with her she will enter Paradise directly.

He is your Guest only for a few days

عن معاذ بن جبل رضى الله تعالى عنه: عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال "لا تؤذى امرأة زوجها فى الدنيا الا قالت زوجه من الحورالعين لا تؤذيه قاتلكِ الله! فانما هو عندك دخيل يوشك ان يفارقك الينا" (ترمذی

كتاب الرضاع باب نمبر ١٩ حديث نمبر ١١٨٤)

(Tirmidhi Book of suckling chapter no: 19, Tradition no: 1174)

Hazrat Ma'az bin Jabal رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When a wife troubles her husband (because sometime a woman is ill natured and teases her husband), then his

wife whom Allah has ordained for him in paradise in the form of houries, address his worldly wife form Paradise as under:

Do not torture him, because he is a guest of yours for a few days and is expected to leave you and come to us soon.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has addressed the following words of admonition to ill-natured women:

You are doing no harm to your husbands by troubling them. You may harm them in this world as you like, but in the Hereafter Almighty Allah shall marry them with Houries of beautiful eyes who love their worldly husbands so dearly that they are pained to see even now that their worldly husbands are in trouble by their worldly wives.

The Greatest Trial for men

وعن اسامة بن زيد رضی الله عنه عن النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم قال "ماترکت بعد فتنة هی اضرعلی الرجال من النساء" (صحیح بخاری کتاب النکاح باب مایتقی من شوم المرأة حدیث نمبر ٥٠٩٦)

Sahih Bukhari, Book of Nikah, chapter on maa yat-taqi... Tradition no: 5096)

Hazrat Usamah bin Zaid رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I have not left behind for men a trial more harmful than the trial by women.

The trial by women is the hardest trial for men in this world. It will require a voluminous book to record how these women become a trial for men.

How is women a Trial ?

The Arabic word "*Fitnah*" means a trial. Allah has created women a trial for men in this world. But how is woman a trial? It is not possible to clarify this point thoroughly in a short time. She is a trial as she was to Haz-

rat Yousuf عليه السلام (Joseph) Allah has endowed man with the tendency of being attracted by a woman. Allah has given clear instructions about the unlawful and lawful channels of satisfying one's desires. To leave man free to choose between two ways is a trial, indeed. The second trial by means of a woman how he behaves with his wife. In other words, does he deal with her in the way which Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have shown him or does he deviate from that way and exploits her rights?

A woman becomes a trial when man is involved in her love that he ignores the demands of the *Shari'ah.* Is he satisfying her and meeting her demands without minding what is lawful and what is unlawful? Is he not providing his wife religious teaching and training? This is also a trial because, man is facing two contending problems. Love for the wife demands that he should not interfere with her in her actions, whereas it is the demand of *Shari'ah* that she should be compelled to keep within the limits of its laws. In short, there are trials at every step and a man cannot steer clear of these trials except with the help of Almighty Allah. A man should, therefore, try his best to discharge the rights of his wife and also pay attention to her training and education. While keeping in view her loss and gain, he should at the same time also shun all unlawful activities and temptations. As man cannot succeed in all these trying situations without Allah's help, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us a supplication:

اللهم انی اعوذبك من فتنة النساء

> O Allah! I take refuge in you from the trials of women.

This contains a hint that it is not possible to go through this trial and remain safe from its harms without Allah's specific help. It is, therefore, necessary to turn to Almighty Allah and pray with submission and sincerity

that He may protect us from falling into the pit of errors and sins and temptations. Everyone should make this supplication a part of his daily prayers.

Everyone is a Caretaker and Guardian

وعن ابن عمر رضی اللہ عنہما عن النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم قال

"کلکم راع وکلکم مسؤل عن رعیتہ" (صحیح بخاری کتاب الجمعۃ باب الجمعۃ فی القریٰ والمدن حدیث نمبر ۸۹۳)

Sahih Bukhari, the book of Friday, chapter Friday prayer in villages.......Tradition no: 893)

This is a wonderful Tradition and is very comprehensive in its import and the Tradition has been addressed to everyone of us. Everyone will be questioned about the persons and things which have been placed under his charge. The Arabic word "*Ra'i*" means a guardian or a caretaker. It also means a herdsman, because he feeds the herds of goats and sheep. It also means a ruler and those over whom he rules are his "*Ra'iyiyah*" subjects. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, therefore, said that everyone is a guardian or caretaker and he will be asked on the Day of Judgment how he discharged his duties of caretaking and guarding, his subject.

The Ruler is the Guardian of his subjects

"والامیر راعٍ"

Every Ruler is the guardian of those placed under his care. He will be asked on the Day of Judgment: How did you look after them? The conception of a Ruler in Islam is not wearing the crown of Rulership, and keeping himself aloof from his subjects. The conception of a Ruler in Islam is to serve and take care of the subject. That is why Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ has said: Even if a dog

dies hungry on the bank of the river Euphrates I think that on the Day of Judgment I shall be asked, "O Umar why a dog died hungry during your rule."

Caliphate a huge burden of responsibilities

When Hazrat Umar Farooq the Great رضی اللہ عنہ was fatally wounded, the people requested him to nominate someone to succeed him as caliph after him. At that time they recommended to him his son for the Caliphate. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was undoubtedly a dignified Companion. None had any doubt about his learning, righteousness, and sincerity. When the people proposed to him the name of his son, Hazrat Umar Farooq the Great رضی اللہ عنہ said: Do you want me to nominate after me as caliph a person who does not know how to divorce his wife? The incident is as follows:

During the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ divorced his wife during her menstruation period and he did not know that to divorce a woman in this condition was forbidden . The Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered him to revoke the divorce, and in obedience to the Prophet's order he did revoke the divorce. In rejecting the people's advice to nominate Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ as caliph after him. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ referred to this event of divorce.

The people again insisted on their proposal on the plea that Hazrat Abdullah's fault in the matter of divorce was due to his ignorance of the injunction about divorce and this did not disqualify him for the Caliphate. The reply which Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ gave to the people is worth remembering. He told them:

It is quite enough that the noose of Caliphate fell around the neck of one of the sons of Khattab. Now I do not want to put this noose of Caliphate on the neck of any

other member of my clan. The reign and Caliphate are really a very heavy burden of responsibility. On the occasion of accountability in the Hereafter it will be a great boon for me if I am let off with no loss and no gain.

This is the conception of a Ruler and a Guardian in Islam. He further added:

Man is the Guardian and protector of his wife and children.

والرجل راع على اهل بيته

Man is Guardian and Protector of his household.

His wife, children and other members of which he is head are all included in the meaning of household. The head of the household will be questioned in the Hereafter about every member. He will be asked: This household was placed under your control How did you deal with your wife and children? In what manner did you look after them and how did you discharge their rights? Did you ever take care if they were following the path of religion or not to see if they were going in the direction of Hell? Did you ever pay attention to such vital matters? Man will be questioned about all these things on the Day of Resurrection as has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا (سورة التحريم:٦)

O believers save yourselves and your family from the Fire.... (66:6)

According to the injunction contained in this verse it is not enough that the believers should save only themselves from the punishment of the Fire of Hell by doing good deeds like praying, fasting, optional acts of devotion, remembrance of Allah, etc. while paying no attention to the activities of their children and other persons under

their charge and thus failing in their duty to save the latter also from the punishment of the Fire of Hell. Beware, that on the Day of Judgment you will be questioned why you did not discharge your duty. You will be punished for this neglect on your part. That is why it was said that man is a guardian over his household.

The woman is a Guardian over the household and the children

والمرأة راعية على بيت زوجها وولده

And the woman is a guardian over the house of her husband and his children.

Thus, the care of two things have been entrusted to the woman, the house of her husband and his children. She is required to guard the house, manage it efficiently in all its affairs, including the care and supervision of the children in matters relating to the world as well as to the faith. This is included in the duties of women. This Tradition has thus explained the duties of man and woman.

Follow the *Sunnah* of Hazrat Fatimah رضی الله عنها

Hazrat Fatimah رضی الله عنها is the leader of the women of Paradise. After marriage she went to Hazrat Ali's house. Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Fatimah رضی الله عنها both decided between themselves that Hazrat Ali رضی الله عنه would attend to outdoor work and Hazrat Fatimah رضی الله عنها would discharge her duties within the house with great diligence and enthusiasm and she would also serve her husband with love and faith. The work she had to do required great labour and was hard for her. It was not an easy job as it is in our times that you switch on the electric stove and the food is ready. In those days the preparation of food involved grinding the barley on a hand mill, collecting

wood, and firing the oven for baking the bread. It was indeed a tedious job to do which Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا did willingly and without murmur. When, as a result of the battle of Khaibar, great spoils including slaves and maids fell into the hands of the Holy Prophet ﷺ he ﷺ began to distribute them among the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم . Someone advised Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا to approach the Holy Prophet ﷺ for a slave or a maid. Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا therefore, called on Hazrat ʻAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا and requested her to tell the Holy Prophet ﷺ that owing to grinding flour her palms were hard and knotty and while carrying the water bag the straps had left its mark on her breast. It would be a great relief to her if a slave or maid was given to her. After making this request Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا returned home.

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ came home, Hazrat ʻAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا conveyed to the Prophet ﷺ his daughter's problems and her request for a slave or maid. After all the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a father and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا his dearest child. You may well imagine how he must have felt stirred in his heart, but he remained calm and sent for Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا and said to her: Fatimah you have asked me for a maid or a slave. I would not like to provide a maid or slave to Muhammad's daughter, unless every resident of Madinah had one.

Tasbeeh Fatimah - a Unique formula

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I, however, prescribe for you a remedy that will serve you better than a slave or a maid and it is this: On the night when going to your bed make it a regular practice to recite 33 times سبحان اللہ (*Sub-haa-nallah*), meaning Glorified is Allah, 33 times الحمدللہ (*Al-ham-du lil-laah*), meaning all praise be to Allah and 34 times اللہ اکبر (Al-laa-hu Akbar) meaning Allah is the

Greatest of all.

Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا was not an ordinary woman, she was the daughter of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She felt contented with these divine words, and went back. That is why this *Zikr* is called "Tasbih-e-Fatimah."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ made her dear daughter a model for women to be followed by other wives. Whatever the legal position, the *sunnah* is that the wife should be a guardian of her husband's house and as a guardian she should work for her husband as she should work for her own self.

Mother is responsible for bringing up the children

The woman is not only the guardian of the husband's house but she is also the guardian of his children. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has placed on the shoulders of the housewife the responsibility of bringing up and serving and educating them. If the children are not being brought up on the right lines if they are not learning the Islamic etiquettes and ways of living, the mother will be questioned first and her husband will be questioned later. She will be asked: Why did the children being in your lap remained devoid of the Islamic conduct, character and etiquette of Islam. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, repeated the same sentence:

وکلکم راعٍ وکلکم مسئول عن رعیتہٖ

Everyone of you is a caretaker and everyone will be questioned about the person and things placed under his charge. May Almighty Allah, by His mercy, help us in understanding these obligatory duties and in discharging them. *Aameen*!

واخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

And we close with the call that all praise to be Allah, the lord of the worlds.

Series 11

THE HAJJ AND SACRIFICE

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue: Residence of Dr. Abdu Hai رحمة الله عليه
Date: Friday, 5th June, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

THE HAJJ AND SACRIFICE

الحمد للّٰه نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ باللّٰه من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده اللّٰه فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا اللّٰه وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى اللّٰه تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا اما بعد

فاعوذ باللّٰه من الشيطٰن الرجيم، بسم اللّٰه الرحمٰن الرحيم.

وَالْفَجْرِ ○ وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ○ وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ ○ وَالَّيْلِ اِذَا يَسْرِ ○ هَلْ فِىْ ذٰلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِىْ حِجْرٍ ○ (سورة الفجر: ۱:۵)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم، وصدق رسوله النبی الکریم ونحن علی ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين. والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and from the vices of our acts. There is none to let him go astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah the Only One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, our Prophet, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah bestow upon him and his household and His companions His mercy and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

This place was once a Minaret of Light

It is after a very long time that I have received the honour of attending and addressing an assembly at this place (i.e. the house of Hazrat Dr. M. Abdul Hayi Sahib 'Arifi رحمة الله عليه. It seems to be a trying venture to open my lips to say something at this place. Previously we all used to assemble at this place as listeners and seekers of knowledge, and Almighty Allah had made this place a minaret of light for us. By the grace of Almighty Allah, we used to get opportunities at this place to hear and understand the realities and knowledge of the Faith from the late learned saint رحمة الله عليه. Today, however, I have been invited to speak here which seems to me a trying situation. It is a bounty from late Dr. M. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه. Anything that

occurs to the heart or escapes from the tongue is nothing but an endless kindness from him. He repeatedly explained to people like us those precious points of *Deen* without waiting for any request from us and for which we had hardly any right. He implanted this knowledge in our hearts and poured them into our ears which will remain preserved with us for the whole of our lives. That is why, I am discharging this trying duty in compliance with an order of my respectable brother. Mr. Hasan Abbas. Let me tell you that in the past Hazrat Maulana M. Yusuf Ludhianwi Sahib, who is a competent authority, used to address regularly. On every Friday the audience assembled at his place. Maulana Ludhianwi being on his *Hajj* pilgrimage this year, brother Hasan Abbas insisted on me to say something to day in this meeting and I am here to speak before you in compliance with this order. May Allah enable me to speak before you with sincerity. May Allah help us all to listen to and act upon with sincerity, the points of *Deen* to be discussed here.

Due Order in worship

Allah Almighty has blessed these ten days with peculiar rewards. These days are from the first to the tenth, of the sacred month of Zilhijjah (the month of the *Hajj*). If we look closely we shall find that this chain of virtues and excellence starts from the blessed month of Ramazan.
Almighty Allah has maintained a wonderful order and arrangement among the various forms of worship. Thus, first of all He brings the month of Ramazan and from the next day following the end of Ramazan the preliminary activities of the worship connected with the *Hajj* are started. This is because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that the *Hajj* is spread over three months. Shawwal, Zil-qa'dah and Zil-hijjah. Al-

though the main rituals of the *Hajj* are observed in the month of Zil-hijjah, yet it becomes lawful and desirable to put on the Ihram for the *Hajj* with effect from the month of Shawwal. Thus, it is lawful for an intending *Hajj* pilgrim to go out in *Ihram* from the first day of Shawwal. It is not lawful to put on the *Ihram* before this date. In the past a lot of time was needed to perform the *Hajj*. Sometimes the journey took three months. As such, intending pilgrims started preparations for the *Hajj* pilgrimage as soon as the month of Shawwal arrived. Thus, the worship of *Hajj* starts with the expiry of the month of Ramazan and is completed in the first ten days of Zilhijjah. The most important element of the *Hajj* is the "*Wuqoof-e-Arafah*" (stay on the plain of Arafah). This takes place an the 9th of Zilhijjah (and that is exactly the date today).

Qurbani **(sacrifice of animals) is thanksgiving**

Almighty Allah has helped us complete these splendid worships, the Holy month of Ramazan and the *Hajj* rituals. Then He has also prescribed for the Muslims as a compulsory duty to offer thanks to Allah by slaughtering animals in His name which is called *Qurbani*. This thanksgiving is performed on the 10th, 11th and 12th of the month (of Zil-hijjah). Almighty Allah appointed the Eidul-Fitr on the completion of the Fasting month of Ramazan and appointed the Eidul-Azha on the completion of the splendid worship of *Hajj*. He commanded the Muslims to celebrate the Eidul-Fitr by paying the *Sadaqah* (alms) of Eid-ul-Fitr and the Eidul-Azha by offering sacrifices (of animals).

Allah Swears by Ten Nights

The month of Zil-hijjah has commenced and it is the beginning of the ten days period. It is, therefore, quite appropriate to say something about these ten days of Zil-hijjah. This period of ten days, commencing from the first and ending on the tenth of Zil-hijjah, occupies a very prominent position among the twelve months of the year, so much so that Almighty Allah has sworn by these ten nights in the opening verses of the Surah Al-Fajr in part - 30 of the Holy Qur'an: (والفجر وليال عشر) (By the Dawn and the nights). It is not necessary for Almighty Allah to swear to confirm and ensure anything, but if Allah swears by anything, it is to emphacise the esteem and honour of that thing. A large group of the commentators of the Holy Qur'an are of the opinion that the ten nights by which Allah has sworn are these first ten nights of the month of Zil-hijjah. This indicates the esteem and grace of these nights.

The Supremacy of the Ten Days

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself mentioned in clear words in a Hadith the importance and superiority of these ten days. He ﷺ has also mentioned that Almighty Allah does appreciate acts of worship in these ten days more than other days of the year whether that worship is in the form of optional prayers, recital of the sacred names of Allah or some charitable deed.(Sahih Bukhari, the Book of Edain, chapter of deeds during the days of Tashreeq, Hadith no: 969)

He ﷺ has also said in a Hadith. If anyone observes fasts during these days, he is granted reward for one fasting equal to the reward for fast for a full one year. He ﷺ has also said that worship in one of these nights is equal to the worship performed during the ليلة القدر (the Night of value). Such a high degree of excellence has Allah bestowed upon

these ten days of Zil-hijjah! (Sunnan Tirmidhi. Book of Fasting. acts during the ten days. - Hadith no: 758).

Two special acts of worship during these days

How excellent are these days that Almighty Allah has chosen this period (of ten days) for acts of worship which cannot be done in other days of the year! An example, is the *Hajj*, which cannot be performed in any period of the year other than in these days. The other worship is the sacrifice of the animals for which Allah has fixed three days that is from 10th to 12th of this month. Contrary to it all other worships obligatory or optional are allowed to be performed throughout the year. If these two worships are performed in any period other than those appointed by Allah they will not be counted as worship and will go waste. Anyone performing the acts of *Hajj* in other days will not get any reward for them.

The other item of worship is the *Qurbani* for which Almighty Allah has appointed the 10th, 11th and the 12th of Zil-hijjah. The *Qurbani* cannot be offered during any period other than the period of these three days. It is possible to slaughter an animal and distribute the meat among the poor as an optional item of worship, but obligatory *Qurbani* cannot be offered in any period other than that of these three days. Thus Almighty Allah has specially favoured this period. That is why the learned theologians have written, in the light of this Hadith, that next to the sacred month of Ramazan, the days of excellence are these ten days of Zil-Hijjah during which the reward for worship is increased and Almighty Allah sends down His special mercy and blessings. The law-maker ﷺ has, however, prescribed some other special acts for these days which should better be mentioned here.

Cutting off Nails and Hair in these days

Immediately after the sighting of the Zil-hijjah moon a strange command is brought to our notice. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that it is not right for him who has to offer *Qurbani* to clip his nails and cut his hair after sighting the Zil-hijjah moon. As this order has been narrated from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, it has been declared as Mustahab (desirable). According to this order a man should not clip his nails, nor cut his hair, unless he has offered the *Qurbani*. (Ibn majah. Chapter on clipping nails.... Hadith no: 3187)

Try to attain some likeness to Pilgrims

Apparently it looks strange that after sighting the moon of Zil-hjja, clipping the nails and cutting the hair have been forbidden. The reason is not far to seek. Almighty Allah has appointed during these days the splendid worship of the *Hajj* and a very large number of the Muslims remain engaged, by the grace of Allah, in this worship at this time. It seems, as if, the House of Allah is charged with a magnetic power which is attracting to itself from all sides the sons of *Tawheed* (Muslims) and thousands of men are arriving there every moment from all corners of the world and are assembling round the House of Allah. Allah has granted these pilgrims the honour of performing the *Hajj*. These Pilgrims have been ordered that, when they are advancing towards the House of Allah, they should be dressed in *Ihram* which is the prescribed uniform of that sacred House. Again, the *Shari'ah* has imposed many restrictions on the pilgrims while in *Ihram*, e.g., they cannot put on stitched garment, nor apply scent nor cover their faces, etc., that they should not clip their nails nor cut their hair is also one of these restrictions. As for those who are not participating in the worship (*Hajj*) of the House of Allah, by visiting it, the Holy

Prophet ﷺ has, in order to enable such persons also to qualify for Allah's mercy, ordered that they should try to achieve some likeness to the pilgrims of the House of Allah by imitating them in leaving their nails unclipped and their hair uncut. This is a way to attain some similarity to those actually performing the *Hajj*.

Mercy of Allah is waiting to Descend

Our Dr. Hazrat M. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that Allah's mercy is always in search of an excuse to descend on His servants. When Allah has commanded us to attain some similarity to the *Hajj* Pilgrims, it only means that He wants to bestow on those who attain this similarity some part of the mercy and blessings which He showers on the *Hajj* Pilgrims, so that when the clouds of Allah's mercy rain on these servants of Allah on the plain of *Arafah,* a part of these clouds may overtake us also with its munificent showers. Thus, the attainment of this similarity, is a great blessing. Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه frequently recited this couplet of Hazrat Majzoob رحمة الله عليه:

تیرے محبوب کی یارب شباہت لیکر آیا ہوں
حقیقت اس کو تو کردے میں صورت لے کر آیا ہوں

Meaning: O my Lord! I have come to you with an assumed similarity to your beloved. I have brought the form only, kindly turn it into reality.

It is not at all unlikely that Almighty Allah may turn this form into reality by the blessing of His beloved Prophet ﷺ. It is hoped that you and we shall not be deprived, God willing, of the clouds of mercy that pour down there.

Awareness to Virtues is needed

It was the habit of our saint رحمة الله عليه to say from time to time: Will Almighty Allah deprive a man of these blessings and bounties of Arafah only because he has no money, or the circumstances are not favourable for him to undertake the journey? No, that is not so. Almighty Allah wants to include us all in His mercy, provided we pay a little attention and care, we develop a little similarity to the pilgrims of *Hajj*. We should at least adopt the form, if not the reality of the *Hajj*. There is every hope that Almighty Allah shall encompass us with His mercy and blessings.

Fasting on the Day of *Arafah*

As already mentioned, these ten days are so auspicious that a day of fasting on one of these days is equal, in the matter of reward, to fasting for the whole year; and one item of worship in one night of this period is equal to worship in the Night of Power (شب قدر). A Muslim must devote himself to worship and good deeds during these days to the best of his ability. The ninth of Zil-Hijjah is the Day of *Arafah* during which Allah has prescribed for the *Hajj* Pilgrims to stay on the plain of Arafat which is the most essential part of the *Hajj*. He has also prescribed for us optional fasting specially on the ninth day. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said about this fast: I have every hope from Almighty Allah that the fasting observed on the day of Arafah, by a Muslim will become, an expiation for his sins committed or to be committed during one year in the past and one year in the future. (Ibn Majah, book of Fasting - Arafah Day, Hadith no: 1734).

Only the Minor sins are forgiven

It is necessary to clarify here that some people who are not well-informed of religious subjects think on the basis of such Ahadith that when the sins committed during the past year and to be committed during the future year stand forgiven, as if they are on one year's leave and they are free to do whatever they please. It must be noted that the concessions so granted in the various Ahadith relate only to minor sins. For example, during ablution the sins committed by the limbs being washed are pardoned; one sin is pardoned at each step and his status is raised by one degree when a *Namazi* goes to the mosque for prayer; similarly it has been said about fasting during Ramazan that one year's sins of the man fasting are pardoned. Remember that the sins mentioned in all such Traditions are only the minor sins. As for major sins, according to the rules of the *Shari'ah* they are not forgiven except by repentance (توبہ). Almighty Allah has, however, the sole authority to pardon all sins whether minor or major unconditionally. Even after repentance only such sins are forgiven as are committed against the rights of Allah. Sins committed against the rights of the servants of Allah cannot be forgiven, unless the rights usurped or violated of a servant are compensated or condoned by the claimant. In short, all these Ahadith about the forgiveness of sins relate to minor sins only and not to major sins.

Takbeer-e-Tashreeq

The third practice during these days is the *Takbeer Tashriq* which commences from the Fajr prayer of the Day of *Arafah* and continues till the 'Asr prayer of the 13th of Zil-hijjah. It has been made compulsory to recite this *Takbeer* once after every *Farz* (obligatory) prayer. The *Takbeer*,

is as follows:

"الله اكبر الله اكبر لا اله الا الله والله اكبر الله اكبر ولله الحمد"

(Allahu Akbar, Allahu akbar, laa ilaaha il-lal-laahu wallahu akbar allaahu akbar wa lillaa-hil-hamd).

It is compulsory for men to recite these words in audible voice. It is against the *Sunnah* to recite these *Takabeer* in a low voice. (Musnif Ibn Abi Shaiba vol. 4 Page 171. Shami. vol: 2 Page 178).

We are fond of taking the opposite course

We have become fond of taking just the opposite course in every matter. When the *Shari'ah* orders something to be recited in a low voice, the people recite it loudly as they do while reciting a *Du'a* (supplication). The Qur'an says about *Du'a*:

أُدْعُوْا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَّخُفْيَةً ط (سورة الاعراف:٥٥)

That is, (Allah commands you) "to call upon your Lord humbly and secretly".

As such it is better in ordinary circumstances to call upon Allah secretly rather than loudly. However, this may be done loudly where it is proved to be a *sunnah* to pray loudly. The sacred Darood being a *Du'a*, it is better to recite it in a low tone. The people have, however, invented their own ways to recite this loudly. As against this, they recite the *Takbeer Tashreeq* in low tone which should be recited loudly after every *Farz* (obligatory) prayer:

A Demonstration of the Dignity of Islam

My late respected father رحمة الله عليه used to say that the very object of prescribing this *Takbeer Tashreeq* is to demonstrate the dignity of Islam. It is, therefore, necessary to re-

cite it loudly after bidding the concluding *Salam*, so that the mosque may resound with the collective echo of this *Takbeer*.

Similarly, it is also a *Sunnah* to recite the *Takbeer* loudly, while going out for the Eidul Azhaa prayer. The *Takbeer* for the Eidul Fitr prayer should be recited in a low tone.

Takbeer-e-Tashreeq is obligatory for women also

The *Takbeer Tashreeq* is prescribed for women as well, but which being generally ignored. Women generally forget to recite the *Takbeer Tashreeq*. As regards men who offer their prayers in the congregation in the mosque, they necessarily recite the *Takbeer*. This is, however, not a common practice among women. There are two opinions about its imposition on women as a compulsory duty (*wajib*). Some Ulama' say that it is wajib and some say that it is only *Mustahab* (desirable) for women. The more reliable opinion is that the *Takbeer Tashreeq* is a compulsory duty for women as well. They should also recite this *Takbeer* after every *Farz* prayer five days from the *Fajr* prayer of the Day of *Arafah* till the 'Asr prayer of the Thirteenth of Zil-Hijjah. Men are required to recite it loudly but women should recite it in a low tone. Women should be mindful of this duty. As women generally omit this duty I advise them to hang a card-plate with an inscription of the *Takbeer* at the place where they pray in their houses, and they should recite it without fail after the concluding salam, because this is *wajib* for them also. (Musnaf Ibn Abi Shaibah, vol. II, p-190. Shami vol.II, p 179)

The *Qurbani* cannot be offered on other days

The fourth excellent duty which Almighty Allah has prescribed to be discharged during the days of Zil-Hijjah is *Qurbani*. This *Qurbani* can be offered only during the three days, viz. the 10th, the 11th and the 12th of Zil-Hijjah and no other days of the year. The animals slaughtered on other than these days of the year shall not be the *Shari'ah Qurbani*.

Real Islam is to follow the Injunctions

Almighty Allah wants to teach us the reality of *Deen* by means of the *Hajj* and the *Qurbani* which are the two outstanding acts of worship during these days. We are asked to note that no act is important in itself, nor is any particular place or form is important in itself. Acts become important and virtuous only because of the command of Allah to do them. When Allah commands to do certain thing then only it carries a reward, but the moment the command is withdrawn, the reward also stands withdrawn.

Just take the example of the stay on the plain of *Arafah*. If you spend there 359 days of the year, excluding the 9th day of Zil-Hijjah, you shall not get an iota of *sawab* (reward) for your staying there, although this is the same plain of *Arafah* and the same Mountain of Mercy. This is because there is no command of Allah to stay there on other days of the year. The reward or punishment of an act is absolutely dependent on Allah's commandment.

Leave Masjid-al-Haram

You are all aware that offering prayer in the Masjid-al-Haram is such a virtuous act that the reward of one prayer offered there is equal to one lac (1,00,000). Prayers offered elsewhere and the *Hajj* pilgrims reap this additional reward. Almighty Allah commands the Pilgrims to leave the

Masjid-al-Haram on the 8th of Zil-Hijjah despite its one lakh-fold (1,00,000) reward for the prayers and to camp at Mina. Thus, the Pilgrims are commanded to stay at Mina from the Zuhr of the 8th till the Fajr of the 9th day of Zil-Hijjah. At Mina they have no duty other than offering five prayers, ignoring the reward of one lakh prayers of Masjid-al-haram. In this command there is an indication that virtue, righteousness and reward lie in obeying the commands of Allah. If anyone disobeys this command and decides to stay at Makkah to offer five prayers in the Masjid-al-Haram to reap the reward of five lakh prayers, he is a loser; He will not reap even the reward of one prayer for disobeying Allah's command and missing one important ritual of the *Hajj*.

Place and Deed are not important

While performing the rituals of the *Hajj* it is observed at each step that the 'idols' which man sometimes erects in his mind are smashed to pieces. Thus, there is no importance in a particular deed or place. It is the obedience to Allah that counts. Almighty Allah desires that His servants should do what He commands them to do and abstain from what he forbids. In obedience lies the credit and recompense.

***Hajj* acts as seen by Reason**

The entire worship of the *Hajj* presents the above philosophy. Just see that a block of stone is standing at Mina and lacs of men are throwing pebbles at this block. If you ask anyone about the objective of this strange ritual, you can get no satisfactory answer. It is just like insanity that pebbles are being pelted at a block of stone without any apparent cause. The cause lies that this is done in obedience to a command of Allah and there ends the whole matter. If one says that this is mere insanity, then it will be

dismissed by saying: Yes in this insanity lies the blessing and Allah's pleasure.

What lesson does *Qurbani* teach?

The same philosophy is visible in the ritual of *Qurbani*. The word "*Qurbani*" literally means something which is done to attain nearness to Allah. The word "*Qurbani*" is derived from the word "*Qurban*" and the word "*Qurban*" is derived from the root "*Qurb*". Thus, the word "*Qurban*"means something by which one may attain nearness to Allah. We learn from all the acts concerning the *Qurbani* that *Deen* (Faith) is the name of compliance with the commandments of Allah. When Allah's command is issued there is no scope to tax the mind in order to seek the wisdom and benefits underlying the divine command. All that is needed is total submission and surrender to it. "Order is order" is the common saying well known to everyone.

It is against Reason to slaughter one's own son

A command of Allah came to Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام in a vision to slaughter his son. If Allah had desired, He would have issued the command through a revelation (*Wahi*), but He did not do so. Instead, he was shown in a vision that he was slaughtering his son. If this had happened to an ordinary man he would have ignored the command on the plea that it was only a vision. However, a vision in the case of a prophet is as good as a revelation. It was, therefore, a trial for Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام to see whether he was ready to obey the divine command. When Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام came to know that it was an order from Allah to slaughter his son, he did not question Almighty Allah why such a command was being given to him and what wisdom and benefit lay in it. No law and no custom on the surface of the earth

can allow and appreciate that a father should slaughter his son. A command like this can in no way be justified and accepted on the scale of Reason.

Like Father like Son.

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did not inquire from Almighty Allah the reason for this command to slaughter the son. However, in order to test the son he put to him the following question:

يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ

O my son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrify you. So look. What do you think? (37:102)

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did not inquire from his son his opinion so that if he did not agree to be slaughtered he would not carry out Allah's command to slaughter him. He asked this question only to test the son about his attitude towards Allah. The son was after all his father's son from whose progeny the last of all Prophets was to come. The great son also did not inquire why and for what fault he was going to be slaughtered. His only reply to the question was:

يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

O my father! Do what you have been commanded to do. God willing, you will find me Patient. (37:102)

The obedient son encouraged his father to obey Allah's command, assuring him that he would not offer any resistance against his action.

The father as well as the son being of so high status, resolved that Allah's command be executed. The father made the son lie down on the ground Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام requested his father to place him on the ground, forehead downwards, for if his face was upwards, he Hazrat Ibra-

him عليه السلام might not be able to use the knife on account of paternal love. Almighty Allah appreciated these charming manners so much that He mentioned them in the Qur'an thus:

فَلَمَّآ اَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهٗ لِلْجَبِيْنِ ۚ(سورة الصافات:١٠٣)

Then when they had both surrendered (to Allah) and he had flung him down upon his face..... (37:103)

The Qur'an has used a very wonderful word on this occasion,"فلما اسلما" i.e. when father and son both surrendered (themselves). It may also be translated as, "When both of them accepted Islam", because Islam means to surrender oneself before Allah's commands. This contains a clear indication that man must obey Allah's command, however difficult, painful, harsh and opposed to reason that command may be and however tremendous sacrifices one may have to make of life, wealth and honour for that. Man must surrender himself to Allah's command. This is the reality of Islam. That is why Allah has said in the above verse: When both of them embraced Islam and surrendered themselves to Allah's command and the father flung the son down upon his forehead. He made the son lie down in this way lest the knife should stop cutting the son's throat on account of the face being in sight of the father. Almighty Allah has mentioned this unique scene in the Qur'an with special emphasis. It is stated in narratives that when Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was flinging the son down, the latter asked his father to gather together his clothes lest they should become spoiled with blood and seeing them his mother might be stunned with grief.

Look at nature's wonder!

When these two had completed their part of duty Allah had to do His part. He said:

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَنْ يَآإِبْرَاهِيمُ قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَآ (سورة الصافات ١٠٤، ١٠٥)

That is: We called to him: O Ibrahim, you fulfilled the vision (37:104-105).

Now see the wonder wrought by Allah's Omnipotence when Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام opened his eyes, he saw that Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام was sitting beside, smiling and a slaughtered ram was lying there.

Allah's command has preference over all things.

The entire event related above is in fact the basis of the worship of *Qurbani*. It is declaring from the very outset that the *Qurbani* was prescribed in order to impress firmly on the heart of man and to teach him that Allah's command has preference over all other things and that *Deen* is the name of total obedience. When the Divine Command arrives it must be obeyed without trying to find out its wisdom, benefit or reason.

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did not seek a rational justification

Deviation and going astray from the right path are a common feature of our society today. The reason is that for every Divine command the people want to know the wisdom and benefit underlying that command, and its rational justification. They will obey the command; if they come to know its benefit, otherwise not. This is no *Deen* and obedience. Obedience is what Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام and his son Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام demonstrated by their own unprecedented acts. Almighty Allah appreciated this sacrifice of theirs so much that

He prescribed the sacrifice (*Qurbani*) to be offered every year till the Day of Judgement. Allah said:

" وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِيْنَ "

This means: We prescribed the imitation of this act for the later generations. (37:108)

The *Qurbani* which we offer is an imitation of the splendid *Qurbani* offered by Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام and Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام. This means that we should mould our lives on the pattern of the unique behaviour shown by father and son in obeying Allah's command without any hesitation and without seeking to know its rational background and justification. This is the lesson that we learn from the *Qurbani*.

Is *Qurbani* harmful to Economy?

A section of the people are raising objections to the very objective for which Almighty Allah prescribed the performance of *Qurbani*. They say that *Qurbani* has been imposed without - God forbid any benefit. Millions are spent to make the blood flow through the drains which is highly wasteful from the economic point of view. It means a great loss of our animal wealth. It would be much better, they suggest, to help the poor with the huge sums of money spent on *Qurbani*. The propaganda is being carried on so forcefully that every day persons come to ask if it would not be better to distribute the money to be spent on *Qurbani* among their relatives. Apparently there is no harm in this, they suggest.

The Real Spirit of *Qurbani*

It should be noted that every form of worship has an appointed time and procedure for example, if a man wishes to spend his time in helping the poor instead of praying, he will be guilty of missing the prayer which is an obligatory duty, even though he may earn some sawab (reward) for helping the poor. This holds good also in respect of other obligatory (*Farz*) and compulsory (*wajib*) duties. The propaganda campaign, launched against *Qurbani* that it is irrational and unjustifiable from the economic point of view, defies the very philosophy and spirit of the *Qurbani*. The worship of *Qurbani* has been prescribed for you and you should comply with it, whether you understand its wisdom and reason or not. The spirit of *Qurbani* is that it is Allah's command and you have to obey it unconditionally and unhesitatingly. Man is not man unless he cultivates in him the quality of obedience. The root-cause of all evils, wrongs, and sinful activities lies in the fact that man has forgotten the basic principles of followihg the Divine commands and is running after the dictates of his own mind and intellect.

Qurbani ceases to be worship after three days

So far as other forms of worships are concerned, they can be performed on optional basis as and when desired. As for *Qurbani,* Almighty Allah has commanded that it is only for the three appointed days. If one offers *Qurbani* after these three days, it will no longer be a worship. Allah has ordained this to teach us that the *Qurbani* is nothing in itself; it assumes the form of worship only because of His command. We wish that we had understood this basic point. On this depends to understand the *Deen* as a whole. The cardinal point and basis of *Deen* is that it is nothing but obedience to Allah's commands. What lies beyond is not *Deen.*

The Difference between *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah*

The same principle differentiates *Bid'ah* from *Sunnah*. *Deeds* done in the light of the *Sunnah* deserve credit and reward, but *Bid'ah* has no value in the sight of Allah. People ask what harm is there if they observe *Teeja* (the 3rd day after death), *Daswan* (the 10th day) and *Chehlam* (the 40th day) in which the Qur'an is recited and its *Sawab* is conveyed to the departed soul. The harm is that all this is done without any commandment by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. They have themselves invented these rituals. What we do from our own choice and wish carries no reward and return.

Four *Rak'ats* of Maghrib Instead of three

Instead of three *Rak'aat* of the Maghrib prayer a man offers four *Rak'aat,* and argues that the number four is greater than three, and after all what harm is there in increasing the number only by one? They argue that adding something to the prayer, while observing all its prescribed elements, should be no sin. It will invalidate the all four *rak'aat* simply because Allah has not commanded it. This is not according to the procedure prescribed by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. This is the difference between *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah*. The practice taught and followed by the Prophet ﷺ is *Sunnah,* and that invented by a man himself is *Bid'ah*. *Bid'ah* may seem to be attractive but it earns no credit and reward.

An interesting example of *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah*

Shah Abdul Aziz Sahib Du'a-jo رحمة الله عليه, a leader of the *Tablighee Jama'at* used to visit my respected father رحمة الله عليه from time to time. One day he related to my father a strange dream he had seen. The dream was as follows:

He said that my father was standing by the side of a black-board and teaching some people who had gathered

round him to take lessons. My father wrote on the black-board with a piece of chalk the number one (1) and asked the people what it was. They replied that it was one (1). Thereafter, my father put a zero (0) on the right side of the digit (0) and asked the people what it then became,. The people replied that it has become ten (10) My father added another Zero (0) to ten (0) and asked them what number it was. The people replied that it was one hundred (100). Again he added one Zero (0) making the number one thousand (1000) and put the same question to the people who replied that it was one thousand (1000). My father told them that the addition of every Zero on the right side of the number increased it ten-fold. He then erased all those zeros and added one to the number one (1) on the left side and asked the people about the result. They said it was (01), one tenth. He went on adding Zeroes till the number became 0001. Then he asked the people about the number and they replied that it was one thousandth (1/1000). Then my father told the people that every zero added to a number on the right side increased it ten fold and every zero added to the number on the left side reduces it by one-tenth. My father explained by saying that the Zereos added to the right represented *Sunnah* and those added to the number on the left represented *Bid'ah*. In other words, deeds done according to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ increases the reward of the deeds many-fold. On the other hand, deeds falling within the definition of *Bid'ah* not only earn any reward, but they diminish the reward many-fold and all actions go waste. This example amply explains the difference between the *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah*.

As already emphasized, *Deen* is the name of compliance with the commands of Allah which alone earns credit and reward.

The late night Prayer of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہم

It reminds me a speech of my respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. It is a well-known fact that sometimes the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to go out on nights to assess for himself the conditions of his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. During one of these nights he saw that Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ was reciting the Qur'an in the *Tahajjud* prayer in a low tone. When he ﷺ went further he ﷺ saw that Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was reciting the Qur'an in his *Tahajjud* prayer very loudly. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ came back home leaving them in their prayers. In the morning when Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he asked Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ why he was reciting the Holy Qur'an in a very low tone in his *Tahajjud* prayer. In reply Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ uttered a very beautiful sentence:

I was reciting the Qur'an to one (Allah) to whom I was addressing my supplication and who heard it. Recitation of Qur'an loudly is not a necessary condition.

اسمعت من ناجيت

Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ put the same question to Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ who was reciting the Qur'an so loudly. He replied:

"I was reciting the Qur'an loudly so that I could awaken those in sleep and drive away the Satan.

اوقظ الوسنان واطرد الشيطان

Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Hazrat Siddique رضی اللہ عنہم(Recite a bit louder); and said to Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ (Recite a bit in lower tone). (Abu Dawud Book salat, ch. on loud recitation etc. Hadith no: 1329).

Moderation is needed

The above is a famous saying mentioned in the Ahadith. Commenting on this incident it is said that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught his *Ummah,* to take a middle course while reciting the Holy Qur'an i.e. neither too loudly nor in low tone. This teaching is in conformity with the injunction of the Holy Qur'an about recitation. It said:

" وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا "

> That is, do not recite the Qur'an in your prayers very loudly nor in a very low tone, but seek a middle course between the two. (17:110)

Negate your Propositions

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه has on the authority of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه, furnished a wonderful interpretation of this Hadith. It was not wrong on the part of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضى الله عنه when he said that it was not necessary to recite the Qur'an loudly as He to whom he was reciting it had heard it. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه had a loud voice. If it becomes louder during his prayer, there was nothing unlawful in it. The Holy Prophet ﷺ explained to them something like this: Previously you were reciting the Qur'an according to your own choice, so it was not so enlightening. If you recite the Qur'an according to my suggestion (i.e. in a moderate tone) it will bring more spiritual light and blessing, as it will comply with the *Sunnah.*

Make your life a model of Obedience

The essence of *Deen* is that one should not insist one's own opinion in matters concerning *Deen.* Everything concerning *Deen* should be done strictly in compliance with the procedure taught by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. If

this point becomes firmly impressed upon the minds all forms of *Bid'ah* shall be uprooted. It was to attain this goal that the ritual of *Qurbani* was prescribed. We are all prone to be unmindful of it while offering the *Qurbani*, it is necessary to recall that this worship contains the lesson that our entire life should be subject to the commands of Allah. It should be a complete model of obedience and total submission, whether we understand or do not understand the wisdom and reason behind the commands. This is the philosophy of *Qurbani*. May Almighty Allah help us all to understand this philosophy and grant us its blessings.

The Excellences of *Qurbani*

According to the Ahadith the ritual of *Qurbani* has many blessings and benefits. The number of sins forgiven is equal to the number of hair on the body of the slaughtered animal. That is, one sin for one hair. No act is dearer to Allah during these three days than the shedding of *Qurbani* blood. The more *Qurbani* a man offers, the more he is liked by Allah. The blood of the slaughtered animal reaches Allah before it falls on the ground. Thus it becomes a cause of nearness to Allah. Almighty Allah has ordained this great reward for *Qurbani* in recognition of the fact that His servant is offering the *Qurbani* only in obedience to His command without carning to know the reason and wisdom behind this worship and without minding the money he is spending on it'.

The Story of a villager

It is said that it was a custom in olden days that when anyone attended a King's court he presented to the King some gift. The King obviously was not in need of that gift, but it was presented to gain the King's favour and pleasure

and some good return from the King. Maulana Rumi has illustrated this point through an interesting story, as follows:

Once a villager decided to pay a visit to the Caliph of Baghdad. He wanted to carry a gift for the King. He consulted his wife about the gift suitable for the Caliph. In her natural naivety she advised her husband to take with him for the Caliph a pitcher of water, as in her opinion, the Caliph might not be enjoying such sweet and cool water in the capital. The villager appreciated her wife's suggestion and set off for Baghdad on foot with a pitcher of water on his head. On approaching the Caliph he presented to him the gift of water, saying that it was pure and cool water, the like of which might not be available to the Caliph in his capital. It may be noted that on account of the long journey and contamination of dust and dirt the water gone dirty.

The Caliph ordered the villager to open the cover of the pitcher. As soon as the mouth of the pitcher was opened, the entire hall was filled with foul nauseating smell. Realising that the villager had decided to present that useless, rather disgustful present in his extreme simplicity and sincerity the caliph accepted and appreciated it and ordered the pitcher to be filled with gold coins. The villager, was very happy and heartily thanked the Caliph for his generosity. When the villager was going back home with his reward, the Caliph asked one of his servants to see him off along the bank of the river Tigris.

The villager was going back home joyfully with the caliph's escort, suddenly he saw the River Tigris proudly flowing with its cool, crystal clear and sweet water. He felt ashamed at the gift of worthless water he had presented to the Caliph and realised from the core of his heart the Caliph's generosity and magnanimity, because not only did

he punish him for presenting him such a worthless gift but filled his pitcher with gold coins.

The Value of our worship

Drawing a moral from the above story Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has said that our worship is just like the villager's pitcher of dirty and foul water, deserving to be pelted at our faces. It is, however, the unlimited mercy of Almighty Allah that He accepts them for valuable recompense. Allah takes account of man's limited power and thanks that His servant has presented it with faith and sincerity. The example which Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has given holds good of all our worships which are in fact no better than the villager's pitcher of worthless water.

Royal way of accepting gift

In the olden days it was a common custom that if anyone presented some precious gift of gold or gems etc, to a king, the king only touched the gift with his hand in token of having accepted it. The gift was then returned to the giver, because, the King fully realised that the need of the giver of the gift was greater than his own.

Allah looks for piety of the heart

Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has said that the *Qurbani* which a Muslim presents to Almighty Allah is such a gift that no sooner is the knife applied to the animal's throat than the *Qurbani* is completed and accepted by Allah, and the slaughtered animal with all its meat and skin etc. is at your disposal. It is, as if, Almighty Allah has touched it with His hands and the entire gift is left to you for use as you please. Look at Allah's mercy and generosity shown to the *Ummah* of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ that a gift is being de-

manded and when it is offered in the form of the slaughtered animal then the obedience to the command is enough to please Allah. He does not require anything more. Thus He has said:

لَنْ يَّنَالَ اللّٰهَ لُحُوْمُهَا وَلَادِمَآؤُهَا وَلٰكِنْ يَّنَالُهُ التَّقْوٰى مِنْكُمْ ؕ

It means that "neither their flesh nor their blood reaches Him". (22:37).

In other words, if a person offers the *Qurbani* with piety and purity of his heart Allah readily accepts his *Qurbani*. Allah does not require the flesh of the slaughtered animal but leaves its disposal to the option of the man who has offered the *Qurbani*. If he himself uses the entire flesh, there is no sin in it. It is, however, very desirable that he should himself use only one-third of it and distribute one-third among his relatives and the remaining one-third among the poor. The point to note here is that it does not displease Allah at all if the entire flesh is consumed by the person himself who is offering the *Qurbani*.

Are these animals our Carriers on "Pul Sirat"?

It is a common saying among the people that these animals of the *Qurbani* will serve as riding animals, sitting on which the men offering the *Qurbani* will cross over the Bridge leading to Paradise. This is based, on a weak narrative which is:

سمنوا ضحا يا كم فانها على الصراط مطايا كم

That is, fatten your sacrificial animals, because they will be your riding - animals to cross over the pul-sirat (the bridge leading to Paradise).

This is a weak narrative to which much attention need not be paid. Yet the saying has become very common. I neither accept it nor reject it. Only Allah knows its

reality. However, that Hadith is quite authentic which says that Allah accepts the *Qurbani* before the blood of the slaughtered animal falls on the ground.

I entrust to you my entire capital

All this has been prescribed, so that a spirit may develop in the heart to comply unconditionally and unhesitatingly with the commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and to surrender oneself totally to Allah. This has been clearly emphasized in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَّلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ اِذَا قَضَى اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ اَمْرًا اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ اَمْرِهِمْ (سورة الاحزاب: ٣٦)

That is believing men and women have no option in their affairs, when Allah and His Messenger have decided upon an affair.(33:36)

سپردم با تو مایۂ خویش را
تو دانی حساب کم و بیش را

This is a persian couplet which means:
I have entrusted to you my entire capital (of life). It is up to you to decide whether it is more or less, enough or deficient.

I have tried in the foregoing pages to define the reality of *Deen*. May Allah help us understand this reality and grant us all the lights and blessigns this *Deen* contains. May He also help us to remember this reality and live up to it the whole of our lives. *Aameen.*

Series 12

LET US ATTUNE OUR LIFE WITH '*SEERAH*'

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 11th Septemebr, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

During assemblies held in the name of the "*SEERAT*" (biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) we indulge in such activities as are totally opposed to the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Speeches are delivered in these assemblies about the Prophet's teachings and *Sunnah*, but actually we ridicule these very teachings of *Sunnah* and directions which the Holy Prophet ﷺ brought with him.

LET US ATTUNE OUR LIFE WITH '*SEERAH*'

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له نشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُواللهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْاٰخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا ﴿ (سورة الاحزاب: ٢١)

امنت باللہ صدق اللہ مولانا العظیم و صدق رسولہ النبی الکریم و
نحن علیٰ ذٰلک من الشھٰدین والشٰکرین والحمد للہ رب العٰلمین

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send on him on his household and on his Companions his mercy and bless them and send them peace in abundance.

In the messenger of Allah there is a beautiful model for such of you who hopes in Allah and Last Day and remembers Allah a great deal. (33:21)

The Discourse about the Prophet ﷺ is a means to great Blessing

The twelfth of Rabiʿul-Awwal of the Islamic month has assumed the status of regular celebration and festival in our society, in our country and in the Indo-Pak sub-continent. No sooner does the month of Rabiʿul-aw-wal arrives than an endless chain of *Seerat* (Biography of the Prophet ﷺ) and his Birth-Day celebrations commence. Discourses held on the subject of the biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are obviously the highest source of blessings for the believers. The difficulty however, in our soci-

ety is that we confine these blessed and enlightening discourses and speeches only to the month of Rabi'ul-Awwal, rather, only to the twelfth day of this month. This practice is justified by saying that these celebrations are held on this date because this is the date of the blessed arrival of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in this world.

While doing all this we forget to consider what are the teachings of the reverend personality of the Prophet ﷺ on whose sacred biography seminars are being held and whose sacred birth-day is being celebrated. Do the Prophet's teachings contain any hint at the desirability of following such practices?

A Great Event of Human History

No Muslim can have a doubt that the event of the birth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is the most splendid, blissful and blessed of all the phenomena that ever occurred on the surface of the earth. It was due to this unprecedented phenomenon that the humanity received the light of the Holy Prophet's teachings and the blessings of his unique personality. If Islam had allowed the celebration of the birth-day of any person, then the birth-day of the Holy Prophet ﷺ would have been the greatest celebration and the fittest occasion to be declared as an *Eid* (a joyous festival). The fact, however, is that after having been graced with the Prophetic mission, the Holy Prophet ﷺ lived in this world for twenty three years and witnessed the day of his blessed birth every year but he never thought of celebrating this day as a festival, as people do nowadays. It also never occurred in the mind of any of his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that they should celebrate the birthday of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with any zeal and fervor.

The Twelfth of Rabi'ul Awwal and the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

After leaving behind about one and a quarter Lakh (1,25,000) loyal Companions رضی اللہ عنہم the Holy Prophet ﷺ left this world. The Noble Companions were so faithful, loving, true and devoted that they were ready to sacrifice even their lives for every breath of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. You will however, not find a single Companion who ever took care to celebrate the Prophet's birthday by holding meetings, taking out processions, burning candles or decorating places with flags and doing such other acts of merriment. Why did the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم not care to do so? This is only because Islam is not, like other religions, a religion of customs and festivals. The very existence of other religions depends on observing some rites, customs and formal traditions. On the other hand, Islam is a practical religion in which every Muslim is called upon to live his entire life up to the principles of Islam, reforming his conduct, guarding himself against sins and following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is his life long duty from birth till death.

The Origin of Christmas

The idea of celebrating birthdays has crept into our society from the Christians. The birthday of Hazrat Eesa (Jesus Christ) is celebrated in the name of Christmas every year on 25th of December. If you go into the records of history you will find that none thought of celebrating the birthday of Hazrat Eesa علیہ السلام at least for about three hundred years since the date of his ascension. None of his helpers and companions ever celebrated his birthday. This *Bid'ah* (Innovation) was started three hundred years after his leaving the world, by a section of the Christians. Even

at that time the true christians objected to this innovation on the ground that there was no hint in the teachings of Prophet Jesus عليه السلام at such celebration. The innovators replied by asserting that there was no harm in this, as during such celebrations and gatherings the Prophet عليه السلام would be remembered along with his teachings and this would induce the people to follow them. On the basis of such flimsy arguments this *Bid'ah* started.

The present Condition of Christmas

In the beginning the Christians used to assemble in a Church and a priest addressed them on the topic of the life and teachings of Hazrat Eesa عليه السلام and then the assembly would disperse. This innovation started in a harmless and innocent way. Later on they felt that it lacked the colour and glamoaur. To give it colour and jubilation they added to these innocent celebrations music and recitations of poems and with the passage of time merry-making musical concerts, dancing, even drinking gambling, etc., became the hall mark of this celebration. Thus, all immoral activities and festivities came to the foreground driving into the background the teachings of Hazrat Eesa عليه السلام.

The Fate of Christmas

You may be unaware of the havoc played by this so-called Christmas in the western countries. The wine consumed on this one day exceeds the quantity consumed during full one year. Fatal accidents, rape cases and other evils that occur on this day far surpass the number of casualties and such crimes during the entire year.

The Beginning of the *Meeladun Nabi*

Almighty Allah is well-Aware of the psychology and weaknesses of man. He knew that if the slightest hint was given to him about celebrating someone's birthday, he would make a great fuss out of it. So He left no hint for man in this regard. It is very unfortunate that what happened to "Christmas" also happened to the twelfth day of the Rabi'ul-Awwal. This *Bid'ah* was originated by some king in imitation of "Christmas" celebrations to commemorate the birthday of Hazrat Eesa عليه السلام In the beginning the celebrations of the twelfth Rabi'ul-aw-wal were simple. They contained only some speeches on the Prophet's biography and the recitation of a few eulogistic poems (*Na'at*). Now think for yourself how formidable form this *Bid'ah* has assumed.

This is like a Hindu Festival

It must be admitted that as a miracle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ even after the passage of fourteen centuries, matters concerning the celebrations of his birth-day, have not yet reached the level of the unbridled festivities of the "Christmas". Despite this, paper and wooden structures of the Prophet's mausoleum and of the Ka'bah are set up on the roads and people are seen going round this artificial Ka'bah. Look also at the extensive recordings, expensive illumination of houses and mosques with multi-coloured flags. In all respects these resemble the Hindu and Christian celebrations and have nothing to do with the prophet's birth-day and biography.

This is not an Islamic practice

The worst of this *Bid'ah* is being done in the name of *Deen* (Faith) and in the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is being done in the hope that these activities will bring great credit and reward from Allah. They think that by lighting their streets, their houses and mosques on this day they have paid their due homage to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If you complain to them about their apathy to *Deen* they will reply that they celebrate the Prophet's birthday, decorate every nook and corner with illuminations and take out processions on this occasion in order to pay tributes to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is not the way of Islam, nor that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor of his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. If there had been any good in such celebration then Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ, Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Ali Murtaza رضی اللہ عنہ would never have missed these virtues if they were of any notice.

What was the objective of Prophetic Mission?

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم did not believe in assemblies and processions, illuminations, flags and decorations. The distinctive feature of their lives was that they had moulded their lives on the pattern of the Holy Prophet's life and had fully imbibed the essence and spirit of his beautiful teachings. Every day that dawned on them and every moment of their lives was for them a day or moment of the Prophet's *Seerah* (the Prophet's biography). Every thing they did, reflected the Prophet's *Sunnah*. They knew full well that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not been sent to this world to popularise the celebration of his birthday, nor to have his own praise sung in eulogistic poems (*Na'at*) composed and recited in his praise - no nothing of this sort. It is well known that the unbelievers of Makkah offered to make him their

richest man, to give him in marriage the hand of the most beautiful damsel of Arabia or even to appoint him their king on the only condition that he ﷺ relinquished the preaching of his new faith. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ had the slightist inclination towards these offers he would have readily accepted them for the sake of worldly power, fame and authority. What was the Prophet's reaction to these attractive offers? His famous reply was:

I am not going to relinquish my divine mission of preaching Allah's *Deen* even if you place the sun on my one hand and the moon on the other.

Was it the aim of his mission to enforce the celebration of his birthday? The aim of his mission has been mentioned in the Qur'an in the following words:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوااللهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا ۝ (سورة الاحزاب: ٢١)

That is, in the messenger of Allah there is a beautiful model for such of you as looks for Allah and the last Day and remembers Allah a great deal. (33:21)

Thus this verse makes quite clear the divine intention of the Prophetic mission.

Man needs a model to follow

What is the need of a model when Almighty Allah has revealed His Book (the Qur'an) which we can study and follow its injunctions? It is because man, by his very nature, is incompetent to reform himself or to learn some art or trade only by reading books. Almighty Allah has so constituted man's nature that he must have before his eyes the practical demonstration of a teacher and a model to follow for learning any art or trade.

The "House Job" is compulsory for a new Doctor

If a man commits the folly of taking up the medical profession only by studying books on the medical subject he is doomed to fail in his practice; he can but cause only death and casualties to humanity.

It has, therefore, been prescribed as an international law that a man who passes the M.B.B.S. examination cannot practice as a physician, unless he undergoes a practical training in some hospital for a prescribed period, and observes during this period the practical medication and operations performed on patients under the guidance and supervision of some expert and experienced medical professors or surgeons. This is necessary because he has so far studied the medical science only in books and through class lectures, but he has not yet learnt how to put into practice his book knowledge. He must, therefore, undergo a thorough practical training before he can be given license to practice as a physician or a surgeon.

One cannot prepare stew by reading a book on cookery

Books are available in the market on the art of cooking with detailed recipes for preparing various dishes. If there is a man who has never cooked but wants to cook a dish, say of "stew", by reading the relevant recipe in the book lying open before him, he cannot succeed in preparing the desired dish. He can, however, prepare his desired dish under the instructions and practical demonstration of an expert cook.

The Book alone is not sufficient

Thus, it seems that Almighty Allah has so devised and moulded man's disposition that he cannot take the right course without the practical model of an experienced guide, nor can he learn or practice any art or trade without guidance. That is exactly why Almighty Allah evolved the system of sending to the world Prophets and Messengers عليهم السلام to provide practical demonstration as to how to put into practice the divine injunctions, as this could not be possible only by reading the divine scriptures. Thus Allah sent the last Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to serve as a perfect model for complying with the Qur'anic injunctions.

The Light of the Prophet's teachings is needed

How nicely has the Holy Qur'an expressed this idea in another place!

قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ مِنَ اللهِ نُوْرٌوَّ كِتَابٌ مُّبِيْنٌ (سورة مائده: ١٥)

A light and a clear Book has come to you from Allah. (5:15)

There is an indication in this verse that if a man has a book, but has no light, whether sunlight, electricity or candle light, he cannot benefit from the contents of the book. If a man has sources of natural or artificial lights but is blind, he too, cannot receive any benefit from books. In the same way Allah sent along with the Qur'an, the guiding light of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ without which you can neither fully understand the injunctions contained in the Qur'an, nor can you comply with them according to Allah's will.

The teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are themselves light

Some ignorant and inconsiderate people interpret the above quoted Qur'anic verse to mean that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was not a man in his personal capacity but was a "Light". Just think, what is the worth of these electric and other artificial lights as compared with the light of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ? This verse is telling us that the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are a kind of light in which you can understand and follow rightly the injunctions of the "Clear Book", that is the Qur'an. Allah sent His Messenger ﷺ to this world that the light of his teachings may provide a practical explanation and demonstration of the Book of Allah before you. For this purpose Allah has made the Prophet's life a complete model, the like of which humanity is unable to produce. You have been commanded to see and follow this model.

The Prophet's life provides a model for every walk of life

If you are a father, then see how Hazrat Fatimah's father ﷺ behaved. If you are a husband, be like the husband of Hazrat 'Ayesha رضی اللہ عنہا and if you are a Ruler, then see how the ruler of Madinah ﷺ ruled over his territory. If you are a labourer, see how the shepherd of Makkah tended his goats on the hills of Makkah. If you are a trader see how the Holy Prophet ﷺ carried on his trade in Syria. The Prophet ﷺ was a businessman, a farmer, a labourer, a politician a ruler and a social being. There is no walk of life for which the Prophet's life does not serve as a perfect model. It is the will of Almighty Allah that men should observe that model and follow it. Allah did not send the Holy Prophet ﷺ that the people should celebrate his birthday by means of joyous

gatherings and processions and then think that they have paid their dues to Allah and His Prophet ﷺ by indulging in these activities. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent to the world that he should be followed and obeyed as did his Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم.

An etiquette for Assemblies

The Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم always remained in search of ways and means of following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It was not a joke to become a Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was delivering a sermon in his mosque. He ﷺ saw that some men were standing on the sides of the mosque, as persons generally do on such occasions in our times also. This is against the etiquettes of an assembly not to take their seats in the assembly nor leave the place. Such behaviour distracts the attention of the speaker.

An Example of Obedience

The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the people to sit down. At that moment. Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی الله عنه was at the door and had not yet entered the mosque. Hearing the Prophet's words he رضی الله عنه sat down at the door. When he met the Holy Prophet ﷺ he told Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی الله عنه that he had asked those to sit down who were standing on the sides of the mosque and not him, as he was at the door. Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood replied saying: When the Prophet's order to sit reached my ears I had no courage to take a step forward.

It is not that Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی الله عنه did not understand the real aim of the Prophet's order to sit. He knew it very well but his fondness and love to obey the Prophet ﷺ were so deep rooted that he dared not ignore

the order. It is one thing to make empty claims of love and loyalty and quite another thing to have in the heart true love and loyalty for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Abu Dawud. Book of Friday....)

Maintenance of Etiquette on the Battlefield

In the battlefield of Uhud, Hazrat Abu Dujanah رضی اللہ عنہ saw that arrows were being shot at the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Abu Dujanah رضی اللہ عنہ wanted to become a protecting shield for the Holy Prophet ﷺ against those arrows. His difficulty was that if he turned his chest against the arrows he would have to turn his back towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ which he did not like: So he stopped the bunch of arrows on his back, keeping his chest towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He took care to ensure that he did not commit the slightest disrespect towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ even in a battlefield.

An incident of Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ

Once Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ took up residence in a house quite far off from the Prophet's mosque. On account of distance he could not visit the Prophet's mosque for prayer frequently. He رضی اللہ عنہ, therefore, arranged with one of his neighbours that each of them would go to the Prophet's mosque on alternate days and relate to his companion what he heard from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, so that each would, by this arrangement, remain fully informed of the Holy Prophet's sayings. Thus did the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم devote themselves even to the smallest items of the Prophet's directions and teachings.

I cannot relinquish my master's sunnah

On the occasion of the Treaty of Hudaiybiah Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ went to Makkah as an emissary of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In Makkah he stayed at the house of his cousin. When he left his place in the morning for the place of the conference with the leaders of Makkah, his trousers were above his ankles reaching up to the half of his shins. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ order about this is that it is unlawful to hang the trousers below the ankles. The Prophet's own practice was to keep the trousers up to half of his shins; not lower than that. The cousin of Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ told him that it was a mark of honour and dignity among the Arab dignitaries to let their trousers or loin clothes hang down below the ankles. He therefore, suggested to Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ to lower his trousers below the ankles, otherwise the leaders of Makkah would look down upon him and the result of the conference might be affected adversely. On hearing this advice of his cousin Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ gave this decisive reply:

لا ! هكذا ازرة صاحبنا صلى الله عليه وسلم

No, I cannot lower my trousers, because the trousers of my master remain like that. He did not care at all how the leaders of Makkah would behave with him. He would under no circumstances give up the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. That was not possible for him.

Should I give up the *Sunnah* of Holy Prophet for the sake of these fools

Hazrat Huzaifah ibn Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ is the conqueror of Iran. When Iran was attacked its Ruler, khosroe, invited him to his court for negotiations. When he رضی اللہ عنہ entered

the court, food was served to him as a mark of entertainment, which he began to eat. During eating a morsel of the food fell down on the ground. It is the teaching of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that on such occasions the morsel should be picked up, cleansed and eaten, as it is God's gift of sustenance and none knows which part of the food contains Allah's blessing. When Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ intended to take up the fallen morsel from the ground, a man sitting by his side tried to stop him from that act, as it might degrade him in the eyes of the King and his courtiers. In reply Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ uttered this wonderful sentence:

اَاَتْرُكُ سُنَّةَ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ ﷺ لِهٰؤُلَآءِ الْحُمْقٰى؟

> That is, "Should I give up the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the sake of these fools? I cannot do that, irrespective of what the Iranians thought of him.

He reduced Khosroe's Pride to dust

Now consider! Did this Noble Companion رضی اللہ عنہم attain honour by following the Prophet's *Sunnah* or are we attaining honour by giving up this sacred *Sunnah*? He picked up the fallen morsel from the ground and ate it in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and at the same time by bending with disgrace the proud head of Khosroe, he realised this prophecy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

اذا هلك كِسرٰى فلا كِسرٰى بعدهٗ

The day Khusroe perishes there will be no Khosroe after him. We all know how Khosroe's name was effaced from the surface of the earth.(Sahih Bukhari, signs of Prophet ﷺ food....)

I shall not give up my usual dress

It happened prior to this evènt that when Hazrat Hu-

zaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ proceeded for the negotiations and entered Khosroe'spalace, they were in their usual flowing robes which might have possibly become soiled during their long journey. Seeing them in this unworthy dress the gatekeeper stopped them from entering the Court and gave them official cloaks to put on before appearing before the Emperor. Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ refused to change his dress and said if the Emperor could not tolerate to give him an audience in his own dress he too was not anxious to see the Emperor and would prefer to go back.

A Dialouge with a Courtier

The gatekeeper sent words inside the palace telling that strange persons had arrived who were not prepared to accept a better cloaks. In the mean time Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ was repairing the broken part of his sword which was wrapped up with pieces of cloth. The gatekeeper desired to see the sword which was handed over to him. On looking at it the gatekeeper said tauntingly: Are you going to conquer Iran with such a sword? Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ replied: So far you have seen only the sword; you have not yet seen the hand that will use this sword. The gatekeeper desired to see the hand also. Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir asked him to procure the strongest shield available. The strongest iron shield was brought which, it was believed, no sword could cut or break. A man stood with that shield before Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir. He struck the shield with his sword with such force that it was broken into two pieces. The people present there to see the test were amazed at the strength of Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir's arm and wondered what kind of men they were.

It is they who conquered Iran

Thereafter, the gatekeeper sent words to the Emperor, telling him that a strange people had arrived who refused to put on the Emperor's official robe and one of them had cut in two the strongest shield with a broken sword. At last they were called in.

It was the custom of Khosroe's court that he was sitting on his throne, while his courtiers remained standing before him. Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir told Khosroe that they followed the teachings of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ who disliked the custom one man sitting, while the rest were standing before him. They could therefore, not take part in the negotiations, unless arrangements were made for all to sit or Khosroe too stood up like others.

When Khosroe saw that they were insulting him he ordered them to be sent away with a basket full of dust placed on the head of the leader. The Emperor's order was obeyed at once. While leaving Khosroe's court with the basket of dust on his head, Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ spoke these words: O Khosroe! Remember that you have gifted to us the dust of Iran. The people present there who heard those words thought that it was a very bad omen. They, therefore, sent their men to get back the basket of dust, but Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ could not be overtaken. This is because Almighty Allah had ordained that those people with broken swords were the custodians of Iran's soil.

Why are the Muslims humiliated today?

It is the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who subjugated the world as a result of their unflinching compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Today we feel ashamed in acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, and we think that if we comply with a *Sunnah*

of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the people of the world, including the English, the French, etc. will laugh at us. The obvious result is that we Muslims have lost our prestige and are being ridiculed and humiliated everywhere.

Today the Muslims make one-third of the world population and they are larger in number and richer in material resources than they were ever before. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had, however, prophesied that a time would come when the Muslims would be in a large number, yet they would be like straws floating on the surface of flood water, Today we have gone down to a position in which we have sacrificed everything to please our enemies. We have given up our character, our good deeds and have altered our appearances and form, in fact everything from head to feet to show that we are their slaves. Even then they are not pleased with us. How disgraceful it is for the Muslims that they are being constantly smitten by one nation or another! It must be borne in mind that when a Muslim turns his back on the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ he should expect nothing except humiliation and disgrace.

Do not be afraid of being laughed at

Asad Multani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a good poet who has composed very good poems full of wisdom and wise morals.

کسی کا آستانہ اونچا ہے اتنا
کہ سر جھک کر بھی اونچا ہی رہے گا
ہنسے جانے سے جب تک تم ڈرو گے
زمانہ تم پہ ہنستا ہی رہے گا

The meaning of these lines, in a nut shell, is that the more you feel afraid of being laughed at by the people, the more they will laugh at you. On the other hand, if you will place your head at a highly raised threshold of someone high your head will, in spite of being lowered down, remain at a higher level.

Thus, if you place your head at the feet of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and follow his sunnah you will achieve honour, dignity and authority.

A believer is bound to follow the *Sunnah*

A question is frequently asked. It is alleged that we have been doomed to disgrace and humiliation for having abandoned the *Sunnah.* As against this, the unbelievers of the advanced countries of America, Europe and also some eastern countries are enjoying honour, peace and power and worldly gifts of life. Whose *Sunnah* are these unbelievers following?

The answer to this question is not far to seek. Almighty Allah has granted you, by His mercy, the wealth of *Iman* and you have pronounced the *Kalimah* (Article of Faith) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. So, you will not be safe from being smitten and disgraced, unless you surrender yourself completely to Allah and follow sincerely and submissively His Prophet ﷺ. As for the unbelievers, they have no share in the bounties and blessings of the Hereafter. If they are placed in authority, wealth, honour and progress in this world, you should not apply their analogy to yourself. Just go through the pages of history encompassing these fourteen centuries. You will surely find that as long as the Muslims complied with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they enjoyed, Power, Authority, Honour and Grandeur. They however, went down the abyss of humiliation want and poverty when they relinquished the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Review your own life

We all take part in religious gatherings and listen to sermons, yet it hardly brings any change in our lives. Let us resolve today to review what are the *Sunnah* acts which we are doing and those which we are ignoring. Which are

those acts of the *Sunnah* which we can start immediately and those which call for a little time. The acts which we can start immediately must be started from today. As for acts which call for time, we should give them that time so as to be able to start them as early as possible.

Become a Beloved of Allah

Our Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to advise us that, while going to the toilet, we should enter it first with the left foot and recite this *Du'a* (supplication):

"اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّي اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنَ الْخُبُثِ وَالْخَبَائِثِ"

O Allah I seek refuge with you from wickedness and wicked spirits.

While reciting this, form the intention in your heart that you are doing this in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. By so doing you will become a beloved of Allah because Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ (سورة ال عمران: ٣١)

This means: (O Prophet! ﷺ say): If you follow me Allah will love you. (3:31)

Thus, if man forms the habit of doing small acts of *Sunnah* he will be taken into the attribute of belovedness and when he becomes a perfect follower of the *Sunnah* he will become a perfect beloved of Allah.

Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه related to us a practice of his in this way: When food was brought before him, he liked the food and was also feeling hungry, but he refrained for a moment from taking that food. The next moment he remembered the sacred *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that when, delicious food was placed before him ﷺ he would thank Allah then take the food. Following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Dr. Sahib also took the

food placed before him. By taking his food in this way he complied with the *Sunnah,* satisfied his hunger and, what is more he became a beloved of Allah.

Follow this practice

While entering your house. You.see that a child is playing and you feel inclined to take it up in your lap, but you refrain for a moment from taking the child up. The next moment you remember that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was very fond of, and kind to, children and he used to pick them up in his lap. Thinking all this you too take up the child in your lap in compliance with the Prophets' practice. This act of yours will make you beloved of Allah. There is no act in this world in which one cannot make the intention to follow the Prophet's sunnah. A book named *us-wa-e-rasool-e-akram* ﷺ has been published and is readily available. Get a copy of it, keep it before you and with its help introduce the *Sunnah* in your life gradually and one by one. In a few days you will be able to realize the light of the *Sunnah*. In this way every day of your life will become a seerah Day of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

May Allah help us all to act on these lines. *Aameen.*

Series 13

ON THE CELEBRATIONS OF *MILAD*

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue : Jame'Masjid No'man,
Lasbela Chowk,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 12 Rabi'ul-Awwal
1405 A.H.,
After 'Asr Prayers

In the gatherings held in the name of discoursing about the life of the Prophet ﷺ we indulge during these discourses in acts which are totally against the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In these gatherings we mention the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, talk about his *Sunnah,* but in actual practice we ridicule the teachings, *Sunnah* and his guidance with which he ﷺ was sent to this world. This is highly regrettable, indeed.

ON THE CELEBRATIONS OF MILAD

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ
بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن
يضلله فلا هادی له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له
ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا نبينا ومولانا محمداً عبده ورسوله صلى الله
تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا
اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم لله الرحمٰن الرحيم
لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِیْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْاٰخِرَوَ ذَكَرَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا (سورة الاحزاب: ٢١)

امنت باللّٰه صدق اللّٰه مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و
نحن علىٰ ذٰلك من الشٰهدين والشٰكرين والحمد للّٰه رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send on him, on his household and on his Companions his mercy and bless them and send peace on them in abundance.

Indeed, you have beautiful model for such of you as looks for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah a great deal. (33:21)

I believe in Allah, Allah our Master has truly said and said His Messenger the truth. We bear witness to their truth and are thankful to them. We Praise Allah the Lord of the world.

The Blessed Discourses about the Holy Prophet ﷺ

To mention the biographical anecdotes of the Prophet's sacred life is a source of great blessing and fortune. To talk about no one's biographical sketches who lived or is living in this world is so praiseworthy and rewarding as to talk about the Holy Prophet's sacred life. Notwithstanding thus, we have begun to mention in these gatherings of the Prophet's birthday celebrations unauthantic and baseless anec-

dotes. So we do not reap the true reward and benefit from these birthday gatherings.

The sacred Biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the attitude of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

One of the serious mistakes we commit on this auspicious occasion is that we have confined these speeches, addresses or the celebration exclusively to the month of Rab'iul Awwal and that too only to one day and only to a few hours of that day. We think that by so doing we have done full justice to the discourse about the Prophet's sacred "*Seerat*" (biography). This is indeed a great rather the greatest, injustice to the Holy Prophet's biography.

We find the no traces of such trends in the lives of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. You will also not get a single occasion in their lives on which they ever celebrated the twelfth day of the month of Rab'iul-Awwal or held special gatherings in this month to celebrate the Prophet's birthday. On the other hand, every moment of their life reflected a remembrance of the Prophet's beautiful biography. Whenever two Companions رضی اللہ عنہم met, they talked about the Prophet's Ahadth, his teachings and different events and aspects of his ﷺ sacred life. In this way every gathering or meeting of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم was a meeting of discussion on the Prophet's biography. As such, they did not require any formal celebration or procession in the name of the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ to express the love of, and attachment they had with, the Holy Prophet ﷺ not a single instance of such showy and formal activities can be produced from the times of the Noble Companions, رضی اللہ عنہم the Tabi'een and their followers.

Islam is not the Faith of formalities

In fact it was not the practice of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم to indulge in formal and showy processions and celebrations. They had imbibed the very spirit of the *Sunnah* and the practices of the Prophet's sacred life. They always tried to understand why the Holy Prophet ﷺ had came to this world, what were his mission and teachings and what he ﷺ expected from the world concerning his mission. The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم had devoted their entire lives to reflection on, and promotion of, such ideals concerning the Faith; they were not after such formal, empty and showy celebrations and processions which we have borrowed from the non-Muslims, like Christians and Hindus. We invented the festival of celebrating the Prophet's birthday in blind imitation of these infidel nations living around us who celebrate the birthdays and death anniversaries of their prominent leaders. We fail to consider that these so-called leaders of the infidels did not possess lives worthy of being followed; they were only either political leaders or leaders in some other field of worldly activities. These leaders were not, in general, men to be emulated on account of some moral spiritual or religious distinction.

The life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is a perfect model

As for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the very divine intention of sending him to this world was that he ﷺ should present a perfect practical model for the entire humanity, so that men may follow his way of life and try to mould their own lives on the pattern available in the Holy Prophet's *Sunnah*. Every moment of his life is a valuable example for us to follow. As Muslims, it is a binding on all of us to imitate the Prophet's

life to the best of our abilities. The Holy Prophet ﷺ should not be compared to any other leader of the world in memory of whom a particular day relating to his life is celebrated and the matter ends there. Every day of our lives is a day to celebrate the memory of the Prophet's life concerning everything we do or say, Allah sent him ﷺ to this world to serve as a complete model till the Day of Judgement.

We are not sincere in our Intentions

It is true that *Seerah* (biographical) meetings are held from place to place and speeches are delivered therein about the sacred life and practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However good and appreciable this action may be in itself, it will not produce the desired effect in the heart of the doer of that action unless he is true and sincere in his intention. If the action is not based on sincere intentions it is fruitless. At times such actions may become harmful and even sinful. For example, how highly dignified is the prayer! It is an act of worship of Almighty Allah. The Qur'an and the Ahadith are full of its virtues and importance, this dignified worship goes waste, if anyone does it only to show it to the people, so that they may regard him as a very pious and righteous man. It is not only useless, but it is possible that such worship may attract punishment instead of reward. It is said in a Hadith:

من صلی یرائی فقد اشرك بالله

> This means: He who prays only to show his praying to the people, commits the grievous sin of attributing a partner to Allah.

This is quite obvious, because he is not praying to please Allah, but he is praying to please the people and to impress upon them that he is a pious and righteous man. It

is just as if he has made someone a partner in the Divinity of Allah. An action so virtuous and elevated as prayer became a sin for want of sincerity of intention.

The same applies to those who arrange and take part in assemblies held for having discourses and speeches on the sacred life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is no doubt an act of great virtue and reward which may produce revolutionary results, if such assemblies are arranged and attention in right earnest and, true intention, sincerity of purpose and warmth of faith. If there is a man or a group that participates in *Seerah* (Biography of the Prophet ﷺ) Assemblies and processions, devoid of sincere intentions but prompted only by some hidden, worldly purposes and not in honour of and obedience to him ﷺ in whose sacred name these celebrations are being staged, then all this is a bad bargain. To all appearance these activities are very righteous deeds, but in reality they are sins incurring Allah's wrath and punishment.

Adultrated intentions

If we review our attitude and activities from this angle of vision to find if the gatherings we are holding and the celebrations we are staging on the twelfth of Rabi'ul-Awwal are to please Allah and follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to make his teachings the guiding light of our lives, the result will be disappointing. There may be a few sincere persons attending these functions to reform their lives, but on the whole, the intention of holding these glamourous shows is something else. Some local groups usually arrange for purposes other than religion. There may be a group participating in these celebrations, so that people may praise the grandeur illumination and the number of the audience, the number of the speakers taking part and their formal high worded, well-prepared speeches eleciting applause

from the listeners. At places assemblies may be held to gain some political advantage or some sectarian attainment, not possible to attain it through open and direct approaches to the public. The general practice on such occasions is to open the meetings with a few words devoted to the topic of the prophet's ﷺ biography then to shoot, accusations and charges against the rival parties or sects in cleverly concealed words. These assemblies are held, in general, for such irreligious and mundane purposes.

The functions are attended to please the friends

The form and method of these celebrations would have been totally different had they been intended to sincerely seek guidance from them. These birthday celebrations take the form of private functions in which invitation cards are issued and displeasure is expressed against those who do not attend the functions held in the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Those attending these functions do not do so out of love for the Prophet ﷺ, but they participate in such functions only to avoid resentment and complains of the patrons of the function arranged to please men and the society and not Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

Enjoying the oratory and force of the orator's speeches

Sometimes a person attends this function to enjoy the exciting speech of a famous speaker because he is renowned for his firy and thrilling speeches. In short, this gentleman is going to attend the birthday Assembly only to satisfy his lust for enjoying the sophisticated, well studied speeches and not to take any useful lessons from the sacred life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Just to while away spare time

Some people attend *seerah* assemblies for no purpose other than whiling away their spare time in listening to speeches, enjoying the lights and decoration and thus having a good time. It is obvious that a good number of men attending these auspicious assemblies have no special interest in listening to the speeches and learning lesson from the sacred *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ projected in these assemblies. They attend them, as mentioned above, to satisfy their own desires. Although even while attending these gathering, in such a carefree and amusing mood, a man may be moved by some word or point and his life may be reformed, yet this happens in very exceptional cases. People in general do not participate in the gatherings with sincere intention to learn lessons from the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet's life guides those whom Allah wills

The Holy Qur'an declares:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

You have a beautiful model in the Prophet ﷺ of Allah. (33:21)

In the light of this Qur'anic verse, it may be emphasized that the Prophet's sacred life is a beacon of light, a message of guidance and a complete, flawless model. It is, however, a beautiful model only for such people as desire to please Almighty Allah, have unflinching belief in the Hereafter and want to ameliorate their Hereafter, and are busy most often with the remembrance of Allah. So the Prophet's life is a message of guidance only for those who are endowed with these attributes and qualities. There is no guarantee that the Prophet's life will prove a guiding

light also for those who are devoid of these qualities, particularly, belief in the Hereafter and a desire to reform and beautify it. The light of the Prophet shone brightly even before Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab, but they could not receive any benefit from that light.

بران که درلطافت طبعش خلاف نیست
درباغ لاله روید و در شوره بوم و خس

This persian couplet means: The rain-water has the same refreshing and reviving properties, but in the gardens it brings out the beautiful crimson tulip flowers but it brings out the useless, thorny shrubs in the saline, barren lands. The meaning of this couplet applies with equal force to these two wretched infidels into whose hearts the light of the Prophet's life could not penetrate, as they neither believed in, nor had they any desire to prepare for their Hereafter, nor to please Allah. What effect can the discourse about the sacred life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have on such errant and hard-hearted persons?

Most often we are not sincere and true in our intentions in organising these assemblies and the birthday celebrations. The result of all this is that no change for the better takes place in our lives even after listening to thousands of speeches on the Prophet's life and after attending thousands of gatherings held in the month of Rabi'ul Awwal in every nook and corner of the country. The temptation to commit sins and enjoy worldly pleasures is not at all eradicated or even reduced through these celebrations.

A Fun is being made of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Moreover, during these assemblies held on the subject of the Prophet's life we indulge in activities which are

totally opposed to the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is nothing but making a fun of the *Sunnah*, the teachings and the guidance of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. These are topics on which we are delivering, and listening to, and attending full-throated speeches, without paying any serious attention to them.

Seerat Assemblies and the violation of *Purdah*

It is an increasing practice in our society that male and female joint gatherings are held on the topic of *Seerah*. This is being done in flagrant violation of the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The command lays down that if women have to offer prayer they should do this in their houses instead of going to mosque. Even in the house women have been commanded to pray not in the courtyard, but in a room, rather in a separate small room. This is the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about *Purdah*, but in an assembly held to talk about his life and *Sunnah* men and women are present side by side. None feels how fun is being made of the *Seerah* Assemblies. Women are participating in the assemblies alongwith men with glamorous make-up, in attractive dresses and without *Purdah*.

Music in *Seerah* assemblies

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that one of the important duties for the sake of which he ﷺ was sent to this world was the total eradication of music and the forms of musical instruments. What an irony of fate it is that meetings are held in the name of *seerah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in which his praise "*Na't*" is sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments along with *Qawwali* "*Shareef*" (a special musical performance of the mystics). This *Qawwali* is called "*Shareef*" meaning pious. No difference is made

between the songs sung in praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and song on other worldly themes. What a greater fun one can make of the sacred, theme of the Holy Prophet ﷺ! More than this, both men and women are taking part in the Radio and Television *Seerah* programmes together with female partners with highly attractive make-up, showy attires and without *Purdah*. Is she not the same women about whom the Qur'an has said?

وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولٰى (سورة الاحزاب: ٣٣)

> That is, do not display your features (before men) as you used to display in the early days of Ignorance.

What a greater wrong and disrespect can be done to the pious *Na't* (praise) and *Seerah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that such ornately prepared women are taking part in these *Seerah* celebrations by delivering speeches and singing *Na't* along with males. You are in a great delusion if you think that this behaviour and conduct on your part will attract Allah's mercy. You are trying to efface the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to violate his teachings and ridiculing his sacred *Seerah*. These are sins which can invite only Allah's wrath and punishment. While holding the *Seerah* meetings and making speeches on his *Sunnah,* we flagrantly violate and disobey the Prophet's teachings. May Allah guide us on to the right path.

Missing Prayers during *Seerah* Assemblies

In the beginning only some rules of the *Shari'ah* were violated during participation in these *Seerah* gatherings and none minded this, but with the passage of time things have gone too far. People involved in managing these gatherings and listening to the speeches delivered

therein forget to offer their prayers and miss them quite frequently. These gatherings with their programmes continue till two O'clock in the night and the Fajr prayer is missed deliberately. The injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about the importance of prayer are violated, although he ﷺ has emphasized in his injunctions that if a man who misses his one ʻAsr prayer is like one who loses all his property and all the members of his family: What a tremendous loss indeed! How strange it is that, we are busy with an apparently sacred programme concerning the Holy Prophet's life and at the same time we are freely violating his ﷺ imperative command regarding the protection and preservation of the obligatory Prayers!

Disturbing the Muslims through *Seerah* Gatherings

The *Seerah* programmes are in progress with only about two or three dozens of participant but a very big loud speaker has been installed which is transmitting the speeches of the speakers at its full volume disturbing all living in the surrounding area. This means that no sick, old or disabled person of the area can sleep as long as the programmes are going on. Was this the pious conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ?

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ got up at night for the *Tahajjud* prayer, as narrated by Hazrat ʻAyeshah رضی الله عنها he rose from his bedding very quietly, and opened the door also quietly, lest ʻAyeshah رضی الله عنها should be awakened from her sleep. As for the Holy Prophet's behaviour in an obligatory duty like the Prayer, he ﷺ is reported to have said: When I hear during prayer a child weeping I shorten the prayer, lest by hearing the child's weeping his mother should be in distress. But look! What is being done in these *Seerah* celebrations. Such powerful loudspeakers are installed unnecessari-

ly only for the sake of two to three dozen participants with the result that an old and sick person cannot sleep in his house peacefully. Those responsible for all this are ignorant of the fact that by so doing they are committing grievous and major sins, because to cause distress to a Muslim is a major sin. Yet nobody is mindful of this serious situation. (N-saee. Book of ten women..... Hadith no: 3963)

Taking out processions in imitation of others

All these activities prove that we are not true in our intentions - which are concentrated on something other than adopting and acting upon the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As already mentioned, in the beginning our activities are confined only to holding gatherings and meetings at various places. Crossing this limit we have now gone ahead to the extent of taking out processions on the plea that such and such sect takes out processions in remembrance of the name of its Imam in a particular month. Why should we, too, not take out processions in Rabiʻul-Awwal in the name of our Prophet ﷺ? In other words, in taking out processions in the month of Rabiʻul-Awwal we are imitating the sect that takes out processions in the month of Muharram. By so doing we are only deluding ourselves into the belief that we are following the commands of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and are doing full justice to his ﷺ dignity and honour.

Would the Holy Prophet ﷺ appreciate the processions, if he ﷺ was ever to see them which are being taken out in his name? Our Holy Prophet ﷺ has always taught this *Ummah* to refrain from such formal and showy processions and demonstrations. He ﷺ has commanded us that instead of hankering after showy, useless and formal activities like these, we should resort to his sacred teachings and try to make them the guiding light of our lives. No-

body can point out a single instance from the pious lives of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that they ever took out any procession in the month of Rabiʿul-Awwal or any other month of the year in the name of the Prophet's *Seerah* (biography). I at least have not come across even a single evidence during the history of this entire period of thirteen centuries which may prove that anyone ever took out such a profession. It is, however, true that the Shia community takes out processions in the month of Muharram in the name of their Imams. We also become tempted to take out processions in the name of our Prophet ﷺ in imitation of the *Shiʿas,* in violation of this Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ.

من تشبه بقوم فهو منهم

(Abu Dawood,Book garments... Hadith no: 4031)

> A man who tries to make resemblance with any community becomes one of them.

It is a pity that we have not confined our activities to taking out only processions. We have gone too far beyond that. Now we are making images of the sacred Kaʿbah the sacred *Rozah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ including the green dome. A large number of men, women and children visit these images and touch them with their hands for blessing and ask for boons there and vow offerings for some need and the fulfilment of some desire. And all this is in the name of the sacred *Seerah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent to this world to efface from the surface of the earth, apostasy, idolatry, *Bidʿah,* and ignorance, but today we have started all these innovations and sinful practices in the very name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The image of the mausoleum of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which you have made with your own hands has absolutely no virtue in it. Yet this false and artificial image is being touched and

kissed for blessings. May Allah save us from this.

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ and the Hajr-e-Aswad

At the time of Kissing the Black stone Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said:

O Black Stone! I know that you are nothing more than a piece of stone. By Allah, I would never have kissed you, if I had not seen the Holy Prophet ﷺ kissing you. I am kissing you only because I have seen the Holy Prophet ﷺ kissing you and because this is his *Sunnah*. (Sahih Bukhari chapter on Hajj - Black stone, Hadith no: 1597)

This is what Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said to the Black Stone, but here we have made with our own hands a Green Dome, and an image of the Ka'bah which are regarded as a source of blessing and which are being kissed. This is reviving what the Holy Prophet ﷺ had uprooted. There is illumination, record-playing, musical entertainments and enjoyments. Festivals are held in the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is an excuse for turning the *Deen* (Faith) into a play and sport, which Satan has taught us to do. I appeal to you to have, for Allah's sake, mercy on your souls and do full justice to the dignity and honour of the Prophet's *seerah*. The Prophet's dignity and honour demand of us that we should try to mould our lives on the pattern of the Prophet's sacred practice.

For the sake of Allah change this practice

How many people attend these meetings with the intention that they shall change their practices according to the *Sunnah*? If they are deviating fifty of the Prophetic Practices after listning to these sermons they shall correct at least ten of them. Is there a single soul who changed himself like this? They are, however always ready to devote their time,

effort and spend money to take out processions, stage festivals, erect arches and arrange illuminations, because they receive joy and satisfaction from such activities. On the other hand neither the Self nor Satan are pleased with the real conduct and course of life shown by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

An Appeal

I appeal, in the name of Allah, to relinquish this misconduct and disobedience and do full justice to the dignity and honour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by strictly following his teachings. May Almighty Allah help us all to follow the straight path of his *sunnah. Aameen.*

وآخر دعوٰنا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

And we close with the call that the praise
be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Series 14

DO NOT DESPISE THE POOR

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 21st February,.1992
After 'Asr Prayers.

Values and views have totally changed today. Now respected, honoured and worthy of public attention is he who has dignity, high status, high office and wealth. On the other hand, he, who is weak in worldly resources, poor and who belongs to a lower profession, has neither respect, nor honour, nor public attention; he is rather treated with contempt. Remember well that such conduct has nothing to do with *Deen* (Faith).

DO NOT DESPISE THE POOR

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعینه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوکل علیه ونعوذ
بالله من شرور انفسناومن سیات اعمالنا من یهده الله فلا مضل له ومن
یضلله فلا هادی له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشریك له
ونشهدان سید نا و سندنا و نبینا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلی الله
تعالیٰ علیه وعلیٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسلیما کثیرا
اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشیطان الرجیم بسم لله الرحمٰن الرحیم
وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِیْنَ یَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِیِّ یُرِیْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهٗ
وَلَا تَعْدُ عَیْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ(سورة الکہف: ۲۸)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبی الکریم ونحن علی ذلك من الشاهدين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

Restrain yourself along with those who call their Lord in the morning and the evening seeking His countenance and let not your eyes overlook them. (18:28)

Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has framed another chapter, viz., "باب فضل ضعفة المسلمين والفقراء والحاملين" The subject of this chapter deals with the virtues of such Muslims as are financially and socially weak.

These people are not weak

The intention of touching this topic is to invite attention to a sad state of affairs, that people whom Almighty Allah has granted some status in worldly life, e.g., wealth, rank and fame, etc. generally look down upon the people in the lower class of the society and treat them with contempt. They are being told, as a warning, that they should not despise those

who appear to be weak financially or bodily or in status. May be that such less privileged people are more respectable in the sight of Allah than those in the upper grade of the society. Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has, therefore, opened this chapter with a relevant verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهٗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ (سورة الكهف: ٢٨)

This verse has been addressed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying "Restrain yourself along with those who call their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance and let not your eyes overlook them".

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is asked not to refrain from paying attention to those who are poor, low in status and who belong to the depressed classes of the society.

Who are the beloved of Allah?

There is no Muslim who is not aware of the intimate relations existing between Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ is most beloved in the sight of Allah of all that is in the universe, so much so that the entire Qur'an abounds in his ﷺ praise. Allah has said:

اِنَّآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ شَاهِدًا وَّمُبَشِّرًا وَّنَذِيْرًا ۙ وَّدَاعِيًا اِلَى اللّٰهِ بِاِذْنِهٖ وَسِرَاجًا مُّنِيْرًا ۝

(سورة الاحزاب: ٤٥،٤٦)

"(O Prophet ﷺ!) We have indeed sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a warner; and a summoner to Allah by His permission and as an illuminating lamp. (33:45-46)

Whenever Almighty Allah decides to praise His beloved Prophet ﷺ, He is very generous in using beautiful words of praise.

A Loving Indifference

There are two or three places in the Holy Qur'an where Almighty Allah has expressed towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ a little, mild reproof in a lover's style, showing His disapproval of some action of the Prophet ﷺ. One of these is the incident mentioned in the 80th Surah of the Holy Qur'an. It so happened that once a few leaders of the unbelievers were on a visit to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Considering that preaching Islam to them would be more profitable for the cause of Islam, he ﷺ became more attentive to them. In the meantime Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umme Maktoom also came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was a blind Companion whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had also appointed as a Muazzin of his mosque. He began to ask the Holy Prophet ﷺ some questions about some religious points. As he was the Prophet's follower he ﷺ ignored him for the moment and continued talking to the leaders of the unbelievers. The Prophet's ﷺ idea was that if these leaders embraced Islam their entire clans would become muslims. Almighty Allah did not appreciate this conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and revealed this verse :

"عَبَسَ وَتَوَلّٰى اَنْ جَآءَهُ الْاَعْمٰى"

In this verse the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been addressed in the third person as:

He frowned and turned away, because the blind man came to him. (80:1-2)

(This shows that Allah did not appreciate this act of the Holy Prophet ﷺ).

Allah further said:

وَمَا يُدْرِيْكَ لَعَلَّهٗ يَزَّكّٰىٓ اَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرٰى

What could make you (O Prophet ﷺ!)know that he might perhaps become reformed or

take head, so the reminder night benefit him. (80:3-4)

اَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنٰى فَاَنْتَ لَهٗ تَصَدّٰى ۝

As for him who thinks that he is independent, you pay attention to him. (80:5-6)

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ اَنْ لَّايَزَّكّٰى ۝

Yet, it is not the responsibility of your's if they (the leaders) do not reform themselves. (80:7)

وَاَمَّا مَنْ جَآءَكَ يَسْعٰى ۝ وَهُوَ يَخْشٰى ۝ فَاَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهّٰى ۝

As for him who hurries up to you in right earnest and feels afraid, you are unmindful of him. (80:8-10).

The seeker (of guidance) has a preference

All this was a very mild reproof to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, as if from a lover to his beloved. It was never the intention of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to ignore the weak and the poor blind man in preference to the rich and powerful leaders of the unbelievers. The Holy Prophet ﷺ considered it better to attend to the leaders first to convey the Truth. His own blind, poor Companion could be attended later on. Yet Allah did not appreciate even this inattention and explained that the man who had come seeking guidance had a preference over the one who had come without no crave for knowledge.

Although these verses have been addressed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ yet through them the entire Ummah has been taught that they should not despise anyone who looks to be poor and weak, because no one knows that this poor man may enjoy a respectable place and position in the sight of Allah.

Who are the people of Paradise?

The first Hadith which Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has cited under this chapter is as follows:

عن حارثة بن وهب رضی الله عنه قال" سمعت رسول الله صلى عليه وسلم يقول الا اخبر كم باهل الجنة؟ كل ضعيف متضعف لو اقسم على الله لا بره الا اخبر كم باهل النار؟ كل عتل جواظ مستكبر" (صحيح بخاری، کتاب الادب، باب البر، حدیث نمبر ٦٠٧١)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Etiquettes: Kibr (pride), Hadith no: 6071.

Addressing the Noble Companions, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: Should I not tell you who are the people of Paradise ? Then he ﷺ himself said in reply: Every one who is weak, financially or bodily or weak in rank and status and the people of the world also look down upon such a person yet that weak person may be so beloved in the sight of Allah that if he takes an oath for anything, Allah fulfils his oath. In other words, if he swears that this and this shall happen Allah, by His mercy, shall cause that to happen as desired by the weak and low person, because he is Allah's beloved. Allah rewards His love in this way.

Almighty Allah fulfils their oath

It Occurs in a Hadith that once two women fought with each other and one of them broke a tooth of the other. According to the Islamic *Shari'ah* judgment was passed that a tooth of the criminal should also be broken. On hearing this punishment the guardian of the criminal uttered these words in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

والذى بعثك بالحق لاتكسر ثنيها

(I swear by Him who has sent you with the truth that her tooth shall not be broken).

The guardian of the criminal did not mean to object to the Holy Prophet's judgment, nor was he malicious in any way. He uttered these words, depending on Allah's Omnipotence that circumstances might arise suddenly in which the judgment might not be executed. As the man did not utter those words by way of an objection to the Prophet's ﷺ judgment the Prophet ﷺ did not feel offended at his words.

Retaliation has been prescribed in Islam: tooth for tooth, eye for eye subject to the condition that if the person wronged or his guardians forgive the wrongdoer, then retaliation will be waived. It so happened in this case that the woman whose tooth was broken agreed to forgive the offender so it was not executed. On that occasion the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Some men are dearly loved by Allah, yet outwardly they are in bad condition; with dishevelled hair, are so weak and repulsive that if they call at anyone's door, they shall be driven out by force. They are, however, so honourable in the sight of Allah that if they take an oath, Allah will fulfil for them their oath. This is also one such favoured person that he swore that the tooth of the criminal would not be broken and Allah fulfiled the oath by inducing the woman wronged to forgive the criminal and give up retaliation. (Sahih Bukhari, book of Compromise.. ransom Hadith no: 2703)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has referred in the Hadith to the same point, viz., there is a man apparently weak and depressed, but he is pious and righteous, closely attached to Allah and deeply devoted to Him. Such a man is so dear to Allah that if he takes an oath for anything Allah fulfils his oath, such persons are the habitants of Paradise.

Who are the people of Hell?

Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Should I not tell you who are the people of Hell? Then he ﷺ said:

"كل عتل جواظ مستكبر"

A person who is ill-tempered, ill-mannered and talks very rudely and is never polite in speech is generally seen in angry mood, and despises others, and has other vices is called عتل" (*utual*)'. The other word is "جواظ" (*Jawwaz*) which means a person who is fussy highly irritable and has a frowning face, too haughty to talk to ordinary people. He regards it an insult to talk to those who are weak, poor and depressed and low in rank and position. He always remains in a proud mood. The third word is مستكبر (*Mustakbir*) which means a person who is arrogant and thinks that he is far superior to others. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that people having these evil traits are inmates of Hell.

The people who possess great excellence

In this Hadith it has been pointed out that people should never look down upon those who are poor and in lower grades of the society, because they have great excellence and value in the sight of Allah. The community of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم who embraced Islam at the hand of the Holy Prophet ﷺ consisted of persons of different economic and social status. Their majority came from the poorer classes, yet they attended the Prophet's assemblies without any discrimination shown to them. On one side sat highly affluent Companions رضی اللہ عنہم like Hazrat Abdur-Rahman bin 'Auf رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ and on the other side sat poor companions like Hazrat Bilal, Hazrat Salman, the Persian and Hazrat Suhaib Rumi رضی اللہ عنہم who frequently suffered from Hunger.

These starving People!

Once the unbelievers of Makkah told the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they were prepared to call upon him and listen to him but they were prevented from doing this because he was always surrounded by poor and starving persons. They said that to sit along with such degraded persons was below their dignity and status. They proposed that they should be invited to see him ﷺ in separate meetings. There was apparently no harm in accepting their request in the interest of Islam. As it involved a point of principle, Allah did not approve of such a proposal and revealed the following verse :-

وَلَاتَطْرُدِ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهٗ (سورة الانعام: ٥٢)

> Do not repel those who invoke their Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance. (6:52)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore announced that if they (the unbelievers) were desirous to seek and find the truth, they would have to sit with the general public for the purpose. If they did not like to sit with poor classes, they, should know that Allah and His Messenger ﷺ are in no need of them. Separate meetings would not be held for them. (Sahih Muslim, Book of the superiority of the companions....)

The followers of the Prophets عليهم السلام

The other Messengers in the past also faced the same situation and the unbelievers of their days made similar remarks:

وَمَانَرٰكَ اتَّبَعَكَ اِلَّاالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ اَرَاذِلُنَا بَادِیَ الرَّ أیِ (سورة هود: ٢٧)

> We see that it is only the most degraded ones among us who follow you, without reflection. (11:27)

It means: "How can we follow you, as we are wise and highly dignified and noble persons?" Almighty Allah told them that whom they regarded mean, weak, poor and helpless, had great respect and status with Allah, so they should not be despised and looked down upon. A question of principle is involved here. It was not possible that the unbelievers should be accorded preference on account of their wealth, leadership and worldly possessions. This is a principle on which no compromise was to be made. Those believing servants of Allah enjoyed great status in the sight of Allah, in spite of their apparent conditions of weakness, poverty and disgrace.

Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ

Sometimes a villager called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ. His name was Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ. He was a rustic fellow, black - Complexioned and very much depressed financially. He had no respect and regard among the people. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had great affection for him. Once while passing through the market, the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ standing there. Who will take notice of a black, poor and unimportant villager, standing in a market in tattered clothes. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed through the market, ignoring everything he approached Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ from the back and closing his arms round Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ he blind folded his eyes with his hands - a kind of joke which intimate friends often make with one another. Finding himself in this grip, Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ tried to liberate himself from this, not knowing who was behind him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, then pronounced these words loudly as the hawkers generally do:

من یشتری العبد؟

غلام کون خریدے گا؟

(Who will purchase the slave?)

As Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ did not know who had held him from behind he was trying to liberate himself from the grip. When he came to know that the person holding him was the Holy Prophet ﷺ then, instead of liberating him from the grip, he began to press his waist closer and closer to the sacred body of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the following words spontaneously escaped from his mouth.

O Messenger of Allah! If you sell me as a slave a very scanty price will be offered for me, because I am a very ordinary and poor man, having no value. What a wonderful sentence the Holy Prophet ﷺ spoke in reply!

"لكن عند الله لست بكاسد"

O Zahir, whatever value the people may place on you. Your value in the sight of Allah is not little, it is great. Now consider there are many rich and successful businessmen in the market rolling in millions but ignoring them all, the Holy Prophet ﷺ met Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ to please him. He ﷺ gave him glad tidings and behaved with him freely and informally as two intimate friends behave with each other. (Musnad Ahmad, vol.3, p.161)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to make the following supplication (*Du'a*)

اللّٰهُمَّ اَحْيِنِیْ مِسْكِيْنًاوَّاَمِتْنِیْ مِسْكِيْنًا وَّاحْشُرْنِیْ فِیْ زُمْرَةِ الْمَسٰكِيْنِ

(ترمذی، کتاب الذھد، باب ماجاء ان فقراً المھا جرین یدخلون الجنہ قبل انمیاء ھم حدیث نمبر ۲۳۵۲)

O Allah let me live as a poor man and let me die as a poor man and raise me to life (in the Hereafter) among the poor. (Tirmidhi... Hadith no: 2352)

The position of a servant in the Prophet's sight

Today values and conceptions have totally changed. Today the respected, honoured is one who occupies a high position and is wealthy. On the other hand he who lacks in worldly resources, is weak and depressed, is disgraced and despised. Remember that a man who behaves with the poor and the weak in this way has no share in Deen (Faith).

Sometime we do recite with our tongues this verse:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَاللهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ (الحجرات:١٣)

Indeed, the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah is the best in conduct: (49:13)

It is regrettable that in actual practice we do not follow the principle laid down in this verse How do you talk to your own servants and the beggars who knock at your doors for alms? Do you try to solace them and please them or do you despise them? do you act upon the Ahadith on this subject? It is very dangerous to misbehave and despise the weak and the poor. May Allah protect us from this sin:

عن ابی سعید الخدری رضی الله عنه عن النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم قال احتجت الجنة والنار فقالت النار فی الجبارون والمتکبرون قالت الجنة فی ضعفاء الناس ومَسٰکینهم فقضی الله بینهما انك الجنة رحمتی ارحم بك من اشاء وإنّك النار اعذب بك من اشاء ولکلیکما علی ملؤها (صحیح مسلم، کتاب جالجنة، باب النرید خلها الجبارون، حدیث نمبر ۲۸٤۷)

(Sahih Muslim. book of Paradise Hadith no: 2847)

A debate between Paradise and Hell

The above Hadith said:

Hazrat Abu Saeed Khudri رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: A debate once took place between Paradise and Hell (as to which of the two is superior). Hell said: I am higher in dignity because I shall accommodate

great tyrants and proud people, including the rich and the high placed dignitaries. In reply paradise said: I shall accommodate the weak and the poor. Both were proud of their inmates. Allah judged between them. He addressed Paradise, saying: You are Paradise, the token and target of my mercy. Through you shall I send down my mercy on whom I please. Addressing Hell Allah said: You are Hell, the token and target of my wrath and punishment. Through you shall I send down my punishment on whom I displease. I promise that I shall fill both of you. I shall fill Paradise with those on whom I send down My mercy and shall fill Hell with those on whom I send down my punishment. May Allah protect us from Hell and qualify us for Paradise! *Aameen.*

How could Paradise and Hell talk?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has described the details of a debate between Paradise and Hell. A question arises how two inanimates can debate and argue with each other. It is quite possible that a dialogue actually took place between the two. Paradise and Hell both are Allah's creation and Allah has the power to grant each of them power to speak. People are surprised to know that even such things, as have no tongues, can speak. They should consider how man is able to speak; who has given him the power of speech? It is Allah who has bestowed upon man speaking power. Even stone, a tree or the earth, can speak, if Allah allowes them the same speaking power.

The limbs will speak on the Day of Judegment?

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه was once on a journey when a gentleman with modern education met him. He expressed doubt about the truth of the Qur'anic verse or some Hadith which states that human limbs will

speak on the day of Judgment. The Qur'an says that the hand, the leg, etc. will bear witness that they were used in committing such and such sin. How will they be able to speak? Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه told him that they will speak by Allah's power; Allah has absolute power to do what ever He likes. The gentleman asked if any example was available ? Did this ever happen? He was told by the saint that it is not necessary that there should be an example of every phenomenon. The gentleman insisted on being given some example of this possibility. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه explained to him, by way of an example, that the tongue is only a piece of flesh, yet it speaks though it has no tongue of itself. It speaks only with the power of speech bestowed upon it by Allah. In the same way any limb, or for that matter, any thing, can speak if Allah grants it the power of speech.

Anyway, the debate between Paradise and Hell related by the Holy Prophet ﷺ may be a total truth that the two will actually speak to each other or it may have been related by him ﷺ only as an allegory - both are possible.

[Translator's Note: If we look closely into Allah's creation and keep our mind's eyes and ears open we can easily discern the truth of many things stated in the Qur'an and the Prophet's Ahadith which appear to be impossible. Take, for example, the faculty of speech. We have seen people born quite sound with their tongues but devoid the power of speech. Similarly, some malady inflicts a man and his power of speech is taken away and he remains dumb for the rest of his life. These phenomena demonstrate Allah's absolute ability to do anything, as the Qur'an has said at many places: على كل شئ قدير Allah has indeed power to do

every thing.]

Hell will be filled with the proud people

Anyway, Hell will be filled with the proud men who used to display their superiority and behaved with their fellow - men with arrogance, despised them and talked proudly about themselves.

Paradise will be filled with the weak and the poor

Paradise will be filled with the weak and the poor who were in their worldly life to be weak, modest and poor, Paradise will have for its inmates those who behaved with others with leniency, modesty and humility.

Allah does not like Arrogance

Allah shall fill Hell with the arrogants, because arrogants are those who display their superiority over others, consider themselves to be great and others to be inferior and low in status. Allah does not appreciate this pride and arrogance even for a single moment. It is narrated that Allah has said:

"الكبرياء ردائی فمن نازعنی فیه قذفته فی النار (ابو داؤد، کتاب اللباس باب ماجاء فی الکبر حدیث نمبر ۴۰۹)

(Abu Dawud. Bk. of garment - Kibr Hadith no: 409)

This means: Greatness is my cloak. I shall throw him into the fire who disputes with Me about this. This pride is indeed an evil which drives the sinner into Hell. May Allah protect us from this sin. This is so grievous a sin that it may be called the mother of sins and the root of evils. Many sins emanate from this single sin of pride. Once this sin takes root in a man, it involves him in all sorts of sins.

The Example of a Proud man

There is a wonderful and wise proverb the Arabic language in which a proud man has been compared to a man who is standing on the peak of a mountain and sees those at the foot who look to him smaller than he and at the same time those at the foot see the man at the peak smaller than they. When a proud man casts his glance at others, he will feel in his heart contempt for them. It is a major sin to look down upon a believer, even upon a nonbeliever. May Allah save us from this. *Aameen.* Thus a proud man despises others and the greater the number of the persons he despises, the larger will be the number of the major sins recorded in his character roll.

Whenever a proud man talks to others, he talks in such a harsh tone as hurts the heart. It is a sin to hurt the heart of a Muslim.

Do not despise even an unbeliever

It is also a sin to despise even an unbeliever, because who knows that Allah may, by His mercy, help the unbeliever to embrace Islam, and he may become a better believer than you. So even an unbeliever should not be despised. It is only the sin of disbelief that should be despised. You may have in your heart contempt for sin and disobedience, but not the hater and the sinner. Sometime a man may not be able to realize whether he is despising the sin or he is despising the sinner and the disbeliever. One learns this fine difference by adopting the company of saintly persons.

Modesty of Maulana Ashraf Ali رحمة الله عليه

What to say of ourselves, even the Maulana رحمة الله عليه has said about himself:

"I consider myself to be inferior to every Muslim in his present state of belief and to an unbeliever

with regard to his final fate. In other words, I regard myself inferior to a Muslim in his present condition of being a believer and inferior to an unbeliever, because, it is just possible that the unbeliever may turn a Muslim in the future and become a better Muslim than me."

Pride and faith cannot go together

Pride and belief cannot go together, when pride enters the heart of a man - God forbid, sometime it becomes difficult for him to protect his *Iman* (faith) Was it not pride that drove *Iblis* (Satan) into ruin and destruction? He thought that he was created out of fire and Adam out of earth, thereby he fell a victim to the grievous sin of pride and despised Adam. He was, therefore, condemned for eternity. How dangerous is the sin of pride!

Pride is an inner disease

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, kind as he was to his *Ummah*, has taught them a very important lesson in a Hadith, saying that they should never go near pride. It is such a dangerous disease that the patient himself sometime does not realize that he is suffering from it. It is difficult for anyone to diagnose this inner disease. It is, therefore, necessary to attach oneself to some highly qualified spiritual guide for the diagnosis and treatment of this disease.

Spiritual training by a Sheikh is imperative

Under this institution a man attaches himself to some *peer* (spiritual Guide) and takes a pledge at his hand to lead a pious life. The disciple wrongly thinks that this action will prove to be blessed and the rehearsal of a few sacred words taught by the guide will be sufficient for sal-

vation. The intention of going to a *Pir* or a Reformer is to obtain cure from the inner diseases at the top of which is the grievous disease of Pride. Exactly as we consult a physician or visit a hospital for the treatment of our bodily diseases. In the same way the *Sheikh* (Spiritual doctor) provides treatment for our inner or spiritual diseases. It is only a formality to place the hand on the hand of the *Shaikh* in token of having become his disciple, otherwise the objective is to get the inner disease diagnosed and treated by the *Sheikh*.

The treatment of spiritual Diseases

Another harmful feature of the society is the increasing use of amules (*Ta'weez*) charms which has been given the false name of spiritual Treatment. Just go to some *'Amil* (dealer in Talisman and charms), purchase from him a Talisman and let him blow upon you after chanting some charm and you have received the spiritual Treatment. This is not spiritual treatment. The real spiritual treatment is to consult some righteous Sheikh for the treatment of your spiritual diseases, like pride, jealousy, malice, feeling of enmity, etc. It is the Sheikh who will correctly diagnose your spiritual disease and will, on the basis of his knowledge and experience, prescribe for you some easy treatment. To submit yourself to the Sheikh's treatment is called *bai'* (Pladge).

Hazrat Thanawi's method of Treatment

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه laid great emphasis in treating the spiritual diseases of persons who visited him for such treatment. His method of treatment was based on sincere work and not on prescribing for them some doses of medicine in the form of some talisman or charm. For example, a man suffering from pride came to him the treatment pre-

scribed for him was that he should arrange in the proper position the shoes of the namazis. The Sheikh did not prescribe for him any charm, rehearsal or counting something on beads.

Pride leads to Hell

May Allah save us from the disease of Pride. This disease creeps into the heart of man so secretly that most often he does not feel its presence. He thinks that he is quite sound in heart and soul, yet he is a patient of the disease of pride. True faith and pride cannot go together. Pride leads to Hell. It is, therefore, imperative that the patient of this disease should do his best to seek a speedy cure. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has issued a warning against this disease in the above Hadith:

Majority of the weak and the poor will be in Paradise

In the second part of this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: Paradise is filled with the weak and the poor. In other words, among those who are near Allah are mostly, the poor and the needy, the down-grade people wearing very ordinary and cheap garments who attract nobody's attention. They harbour in their hearts feeling of Allah's greatness and love and His mercy descends on them. Such people form the majority of the habitants of Paradise.

The followers of the Prophets عليهم السلام were mostly the poor

Any one going through the Qur'an finds out that the followers of all the Prophets عليهم السلام sent to this world were the poor and weak people. That is why the idolaters refused to sit with this depressed class of people, consisting of fishermen, carpenters and other labour classes who were always surrounding the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The unbe-

lievers claimed that, being highly dignified persons, they were not prepared to sit with these low class people.

These apparently depressed classes are the recipients of Allah's mercy and honour, not granted to others. Such people should never be looked down upon and treated as mean and depressed.

Who are the weak and the poor

Another point deserving attention in this Hadith is that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has used, two words 'ضعفاء' (the weak) and "مساکین" (the poor). The word "ضعفاء" signify those who are weak physically, financially and socially. As for the word "مساکین" (poor). It has two shades of meaning, viz, (i) the poor men who have no money, and are needy and (ii) those who may or may not have money, but they are meek and mild in temperament and have no trace of pride in their hearts. This group lives among the poor people and has humility in their nature. A person who is assuming, simple and humble comes within the definition of the word "مساکین" (the poor).

Poverty (in the second sense) and affluence can go together

It should not be misconceived that a man who is well-to-do and has wealth is ordained to enter Hell. What is meant to say is that if Almighty Allah has conferred on any one the blessing of wealth, yet he is humble and mild in his temperament and not proud, behaves with others nicely and discharges fully the rights of Allah and those of His servants, then he too will be counted among the class of the *Masakeen* (in the second sense).

Poverty and "*Maskanat*" (humbleness) are two different things

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prayed to Allah as follows:

اللهم احینی مسکینا وامتنی مسکینا واحشرنی فی زمرة المسٰکین

(Tirmidhi book of Zahr Chapter on the poor emigrants entering Paradise before their rich men Hadith no: 3352)

O Allah! let me live as a poor man and die as a poor man, and raise me to life (in the Hereafter) in the group of the poor.

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prayed to Allah in the following words :

اللهم انی اعوذبك من الفقر (ابوداؤد ، کتاب الصلوة، باب الاستعاذة، حدیث ١٥٤٤)

O Allah, I seek refuge with you from poverty and want. (Abu Dawod, book of Salah Hadith no: 1544)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ sought refuge with Allah from poverty but prayed for *maskanat* (humbleness). This shows that this *maskanat* is something other than want, poverty and starvation. As mentioned earlier, *Maskanat* means modesty in temperament and natural disposition and nice behaviour with the poor. If this humbleness and leniency of character and conduct are born in anyone's heart he will be entitled to the rewards mentioned in this Hadith:

Allah's Judgment between Paradise and Hell

At the end of the Hadith Allah has given His judgment between Paradise and Hell thus: He said to Paradise: You are the token of my mercy, Through you I shall bestow my mercy on whom I please. He said to Hell: You are the token of my punishment. Through you I shall punish him whom I please. I shall fill Paradise and Hell both with men because both types of men are found in the world those who

deserve Paradise through their good deeds and also those who deserve Hell by dint of their bad deeds. May Allah include us among the men of Paradise.

A pious man did not laugh during his entire lifetime

There was a pious man who was known to have never laughed during his entire lifetime, nor was even a smile ever appear on his face. He was always seen pining with some anxiety. When asked about the reason for this condition of his life, his reply was:

I have read in a Hadith that some of Allah's creatures are such whom He has created for Paradise and some others whom He has created for Hell. I do not know to which group I belong. How can I laugh, unless I know that I belong to the group of Paradise? This is the anxiety that is always pressing upon me.

How can a believer sleep?

Some saint has composed this couplet:

وكيف . تنام العين وهى قريرة
ولم تدر فى اى المحلين تنزل

That is, how can a believer's eye sleep with coolness and comfort, unless it knows which of the two places (Paradise or Hell) is its final resort?

He smiled at the time of death

Thus, the pious man mentioned above did not laugh during the whole of his life. Observers say that while dying, as soon as his soul was taken out of his body there was smile on his face because it was on that day that he came to know the group for which Allah had created him: it was certainly the group destined for Paradise.

A life of negligence

How one who cares for the Hereafter can sleep peacefully when he does not know if he belongs to the people of Paradise or the Ones of Hell. It is also Allah's kindness to us that He does not allow such an anxiety to dominate everyone,otherwise the entire work and administration of the world would be disturbed and upset. So Allah does not make such extreme cases of anxiety a regular feature. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has warned his *Ummah* at many places against negligence which prevents them from thinking which course - right or wrong - they are taking. They are advised to consider from time to time whether the path they are following leads to Paradise or to Hell. They should also keep a vigilant eye on their acts and deeds. May Almighty Allah include us all in the group which He has created for Paradise. *Aameen.*

Do not be proud of physical health, strength and beauty

عن ابی هریرة رضی الله تعالی عنه عن رسول الله ﷺ قال انه لیأتی

الرجل العظیم السمین یوم القیامة لایزن عند الله جناح بعوضة

(Sahih Bukhari, book of Tafsir of Surah Kahf... Hadith no: 4829)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: On the Day of Judgment a great man will be brought fat and bulky in body, yet he will not be equal in weight even to the wings of a mosquito.

This entire worldly pomp and power, this physical strength and health and beauty will be of no avail in the Hereafter. This is because the man, inspite of all his greatness, power and beauty, did not work during his worldly life to please Almighty Allah; so he has not the least value in the sight of Allah. The intention of this Hadith is also to empha-

size that man should not feel proud of his apparent beauty, health and strength, his wealth and status, as these worldly gifts may not be of any value in the sight of Allah. The real value lies in assuring that a man's deeds are righteous and he is following the path shown by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

The woman who used to sweep the Prophet's ﷺ mosque

وعنه رضی الله عنه ان امرأة سوداء کانت تقم المسجد او شابا ففقدها او فقده رسول الله صلى عليه وسلم فسأل عنها أو عنه فقالوا! مات قال افلا کنتم آذنتمونی به فانهم صغروا امرها اوامره فقال دلونی علی قبره فدلوة فصلی علیه ثم قال ان هذه القبور مملوة ظلمة على اهلها وان ینور لهم بصلا تی علیهم (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الجنائز، باب الصلاة على القبر بعد مایدفن، حدیث نمبر ۱۳۳۳۷)

(Sahih Bukahri. book of funerals. chapter on salat. Hadith no: 13337)

In this Hadith Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has related an incident which occured during the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He has narrated that there was a black woman who used to sweep the Prophet's mosque from time to time. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not see that woman for sometime and asked his noble Companions رضی الله عنهم about her. Look! How the Holy Prophet ﷺ remembered that black woman and felt for her! The Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم replied that she has passed away. The Holy Prophet ﷺ complained to them that they did not inform him of her death. The Companions did not say anything in reply but it appeared from their attitude that they regarded that woman too ordinary to tell the Holy Prophet ﷺ about her death. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then asked the Companions رضی الله عنهم the way to her grave which he visited along with the Companions and offered there her funeral prayer.

The Injunction about offering funeral (*Janazah*) prayer on graves

The general injunction about funeral prayers is that if anyone's funeral prayer has been offered, then it is not lawful to offer the funeral prayer again at the grave of the dead. If a dead body has been buried without funeral prayer, the order of the *Shari'ah* prescribes that funeral prayer may be offered at the grave before the body has not become decomposed. It is not lawful to offer funeral prayer at the grave when as much time has passed as the body takes to decmpose.

Graves are cells of Darkness

The Holy Prophet ﷺ offered funeral prayer at the grave of that women as a special tribute to her and to show this to the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. After having offered the funeral prayer, he ﷺ is reported to have said: The graves are filled with darkness, but by the blessings of my prayer Allah illuminates these graves, by His mercy.

Do not despise anyone

The Holy Prophet ﷺ did all this to warn the people that it was not good to despise any man or woman and to consider him or her worthless, simply because he or she had no status and standing from the worldly point of view. This was because none knows what rank he or she occupies in the sight of Allah.

ہر بیشہ گماں مبر کہ خالیست
شاید کہ پلنگ خفتہ باشد

This Persian couplet means:

Do not think about every forest that it is empty. It may be that a tiger is sleeping there.)

If a man is in a depressed and down-trodden state do not think that he is of no worth because he may possibly

have a great value in the sight of Allah.

The people with their dishevelled hair !

وعنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم رب اشعث مدفوع بالا
بواب لواقسم على الله لابره (صحيح مسلم كتاب البروالصلة باب اوضعفاء رالخاملين
حديث نمبر ٢٦٢٢)

(Sahih Muslim, Book on charity-the weak Hadith no: 2622)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: There are many people with dishevelled and uncombed hair on their heads. Their bodies and faces are dusty, as they earn their livelihood by hard labour. They command no respect anywhere in the world and are likely to be turned out by force if they visit any house. They are worthless from the worldly point of view, but if they swear by Allah about anything, Allah shall fulfil their oaths. That is, if they say an oath, that such and such thing shall be done, Allah, by His grace and power, does that thing. If they swear by Allah that such and such thing will not happen, Allah stops the execution of that thing.

Our Behaviour with the poor

All these Ahadith show that we should not judge the value of anyone by his outer appearance and condition.

We admit and declare verbally that all Muslims are brothers, high and low, poor and rich, are equal before Allah and that the poor and the deprived have great value in the sight of Allah. Do we keep these principles in view when we actually deal with them? Do we follow these golden rules in dealing with our servants, our subordinates, and the poor and depressed persons whom we happen to come across during our daily lives? What actually happens is that we preach and listen to the golden principles of behaviour

but we forget them in our actual practices and dealings.

Hazrat Thanawi's رحمة الله عليه behaviour with his servant

Take mindful notice of the stories of those favoured saints Allah grants the ability to comply with these rules.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه had a servant, named Niaz who was called "Brother Niaz" by all who visited the saint's convent. He was very intimate and informal servant of the Maulana. While serving the saint and being too close to him all the time, he had developed in him an informal attitude. Sometime he became harsh with the visitors. A visitor one day complained to the saint that "Brother Niaz" was rude with him. Such complaints against him had reached the saint earlier also. The saint called and scolded him for his rude behaviour with his guests. The servant at once retorted very arrogantly: Hazrat do not tell a lie and fear Allah. See how a servant is uttering such words to his own master who was the renowned saint! It is believed that the servant wanted to tell the saint that the complaint was false and the complainants had told lies. They should fear Allah. However, in a fit of confusion he used wrong words. See, how the great saint reacted to the servant's reply. The saint bent down his head and uttered these words استغفر الله، استغفر الله (I seek Allah's forgiveness).

He observed the limits laid down by Allah. The saint then said later on that he was mistaken as he began to scold the servant on hearing only one side of the sotry, whereas according to the rules of the shari'ah a judge should pass judgment on hearing both parties, which the saint forgot to follow and passed his judgment against the servant without hearing his explanation. The saint said that he was mistaken and when he was advised by the ser-

vant to fear Allah he had no alternative but to beg Allah's forgiveness by uttering: استغفر الله استغفر الله

These are people about whom it has been said: كان وقافا عند حدود الله (He observes the limits laid down by Allah). Thus, the lesson we learn from these incidents is that we should all behave properly with our servants, and subordinates and never despise them. May Allah protect us from this sin. *Aameen.*

Those who shall enter Paradise and Hell

وعن اسامة رضی الله عنه عن النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم قال قمت علی باب الجنة فاذا عامة من دخلها المساكين واصحاب الجد محبوسون غير اصحاب النار قد امربهم الى النار وقمت على باب النار فاذا عامة من دخلها النساء (صحیح بخاری کتاب لاتاذن المرأة فی بیت زوجها لأحد الاباذنه حدیث نمبر ٥١٩٦)

(Sahih Bukhari - Kitab Nikah.... Hadith no: 5196)

Hazrat Usamah رضی الله عنه was a favourite Companion رضی الله عنه of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was the son of Hazrat Zaid Bin Harith, رضی الله عنه an adopted son of the Prophet ﷺ. In other words, he was an adopted grand son of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I was standing at the gate of Paradise... (This might have been during *Mi'raj* (the Ascension), because on that occasion the Holy Prophet ﷺ was taken to see Paradise and Hell. Or it might have been on some other occasion during a vision Allah knows better. I saw that the people of Paradise belonged mostly to the humble and the poor classes. I also saw that those who were regarded in the world as fortunate. Prosperous, wealthy and high placed in their worldly lives were detained at the gate of Paradise and could not enter it. It may mean two things; either they were entitled to enter Paradise, but were subject to stern reckoning of

their deeds after clearing which they could enter Paradise. Therefore, they were detained at the door. Some of them had been ordained to enter Hell. The Prophet ﷺ went on saying: Standing at the gate of Hell I saw that the majority of the inmates of Hell were women.

The poor will be in Paradise

This Hadith has two parts. It is said in the first part that most people in Paradise appeared to be from among the poor classes as has already been mentioned: The poor class does not necessarily include only the needy but it also includes those who are humble by their nature and temperament.

Why will women be in Hell more in number?

The other part of the Hadith tells that the majority of the inmates of Hell appeared to be women.

Addressing women, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in another Hadith:

انی اریتکن اکثر اھل النار

(Musnad Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 67)

I was shown that you form the major part of the inmates of Hell. It appears from this that the number of the female will be greater than that of its male dwellers in the Hell. This, however, never means that a women shall enter Hell only for being a women. That is not so. In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned the reason for this. While addressing women. He ﷺ is reported to have said: Women form a greater part of the population of Hell. When the women asked the reason for this. The Holy Prophet ﷺ mentioned two reasons for this, He (Prophet ﷺ) said: You frequently indulge in cursing and defaming one another on small and trivial issues. Women are more involved to these vices than men:

Ingratitude to Husbands

The other reason for this is. You are very ungrateful to your husbands. Your husbands try their best to please you with their hard-earned money, yet instead of thanking them you generally utter words of ingratitude. These are the two main reasons which will drive most of you to Hell. May Allah protect us from this. *Aameen.*

The sin of ingratitude amounts to disbelief

Ingratitude is a contemptible act in all circumstances. It is highly disliked by Allah. In the Arabic language and in the terminology of the *Shari'ah* ناشکری (ingratitude) is کفر called (disbelief), because an infidel (disbeliever) actually shows ingratitude to Allah, for the countless blessings granted by Him and thus he attributes a Partner to Allah, or denies the unity of All Compassionate Allah by his ingratitude.

Prostration before husbands

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith: If I were to command anyone in this world to bow down before anyone other than Allah, I would command a wife to bow down before her husband, but it is forbidden to bow down before anyone other than Allah. The intention is to tell that it is among the obligatory duties of a woman to obey her husband and not to be ungrateful to him, because this will be showing ingratitude to Allah. Allah is displeased with a woman's ungratefulness to her husband. That is why he ﷺ told women that they will be sent to Hell for this sin. How dangerous it is!

Two Formulas for safety from Hell

Allah has clearly prescribed the rights of a husband and his wife against each other. Our sisters must remember that he ﷺ took special care to address an assembly of women and tell them that these two sins are the causes for their entering Hell in larger numbers. Who knows better the secrets of Allah's *Deen* and the natural tendencies of the members of his *Ummah* more than the Holy Prophet ﷺ? There is none other than he ﷺ who can correctly diagnose the disease and prescribe the right remedy for its cure. Thus, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prescribed two formulas for women to save themselves from the torment of Hell. These are: to refrain from the sins of (1) cursing and taunting one another and (2) being ungrateful to their husbands.

The Angels curse such a woman

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has gone to the extent of saying that if a wife disobeys her husband's call to go to his bed or if he passes a night in which she does not fulfils her husband's desire and he is displeased with his wife, the angels curse that woman the whole night. How terrible a warning of punishment the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given !

Control your tongue

It has been said that the number of women entering Hell will be larger than that of men. This saying is being used by some ill-disposed persons as an argument to accuse that women have been degraded to such an extent that even Hell will receive a larger number of women than men. It should be borne in mind that women will not be thrust into Hell for being women; they will enter Hell because of their sins and misconduct, - the sins of the tongue, in Particular. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that of

all his limbs the tongue is the most notorious in pushing man into Hell. The tongue is instrumental to many grievous sins if it is not kept under strict control. You can experience yourself that women are generally weaker than men in controlling their tongues. They are advised to use their tongues with due care so as not to utter words to hurt the hearts of others particularly of their husbands. Allah has commanded the wives to keep their husbands pleased and satisfied in all conditions. They can save themselves from the torment of Hell by correcting themselves and following strictly the laws of the *Shari'ah.* This responsibility lies equally on men and women both. You know that Allah appointed head of the women of Paradise and that leader is Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا. Allah has not debarred women from Paradise, but has declared them to be entitled to Paradise. The whole matter depends on the good deeds they do and the straight path they follow.

The Importance of the Rights of the people

There is another important point emanating from this Hadith which demands attention. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not say that a larger number of women would enter Hell because they are more deficient in worship, offer less optional prayers or are slack in reciting the Holy Qur'an or in remembering the sacred names of Allah. The reasons mentioned by the Holy Prophet ﷺ for women entering Hell their indulgence in the sin of cursing and taunting one another and being ungrateful to their husbands. Both these sins are related to the rights of Allah's servants which they violate. This brings out the importance of discharging fully the rights of Allah's servants. This is indeed more important than the offering of optional prayers and doing other optional items of worship.

وصل الله تعالیٰ علی خیر خلقه محمد واله واصحابه اجمعین آمین برحمتك یا ارحم الرّحمین

May Almighty Allah grant us by His mercy, the correct understanding of the importance of discharging the rights of Allah's servants and help us in discharging this responsibility and liability to the best of our ability. *Aameen.*!

May Allah have mercy on Muhammad ﷺ who is the best of His creation, and on his household and his Noble Companions. All of them with your mercy who are the most Merciful. O Allah.

Series 15

ON RESISTING THE INNERSELF

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 10th May, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

Our Self is proved to get addicted to worldly pleasures. It hastens up to the acts in which it finds taste and joy. As a result of this tendency it produces an inclination to satisfy lust and desire. Man ceases to be man if he leaves his Self controlled, accedes to its all demands works to attain all possible means that may prove conducive to the satisfaction of his tastes and enjoyments.

ON RESISTING THE INNERSELF

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نومن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ؕ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبی الکریم و

نحن علیٰ ذالك من الشهٰدين والشٰكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, our Prophet and our. Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in abundance.

And those who strive in Us We surely guide them to our paths. Indeed, Allah is with the good indeed. (29:69)

The meaning of *Mujahadah* (strife)

Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has formed another chapter on "*Mujahadah*" (strife). "*Mujahadah*" means to strive hard. The word "*Jihad*" has also been derived from the same word. So in the Arabic language "*Jihad*" does not mean fighting, but it means striving hard and putting in physical effort. The word "*Mujahadah*" also means the same, i.e. putting in efforts and exertions. In the terminology of the Qur'an, the *Sunnah* and the Sufism the word means efforts and endeavours whereby man may reform and rectify his deed, actions and character, so as to refrain from sins and stop his Self from taking a wrong course. This is "*Mujaha-*

dah". The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith.

المجاهد من جاهد نفسه (ترمذی فضائل الجهاد باب ماجاء فی فضل من مات مرابطا حدیث نمبر ۱۲۶۱)

(Tirmidhi virtue of Jihad .... Hadith no: 1621)

"Real "*Jihad*" is fighting against one's own Self to keep it tamed. It is also "*Jihad*" to fight against an enemy in a battle field, but the true *Jihad* is to launch a war against Self. The Self is always enticing man to fulfil its desires and submit to the temptations; On the other hand, man, resisting all these demands of the Self, takes the opposite direction of goodness and piety. This is "*Mujahadah*". A man who wishes to amelorate his life and take the path of righteousness for the sake of Allah has to take resort to "*Mujahadah*", by opposing his Self and exerting himself utmost to suppress his desires, however distressing and repulsive all this exertion may be. This struggle against one's own Self is called "*Mujahadah*".

Man's Self is fond of pleasures

Our 'Self' or the power which prompts man to action, has become addicted to worldly pleasures. So it hastens to those acts which provide it with immediate enjoyment. It is inherent and natural tendency of the Self to entice man towards pleasures and enjoyments by creating in him desires and lust. Now if man lets loose his Self so as to indulge freely in the pleasures which his Self invites him, then he degrades himself to the level of animals and ceases to be a man.

There is no peace in satisfying Carnal desires

It is a tendency of sensual desires that more you go on satisfying them, the more these desires will show with greater force and speed. It is nearly impossible to make an

end of such desires. Man can never claim to have satisfied all his desires and he has nothing more to desire. Thus, man can never attain peace in life. Let any one having any doubt can experience this for himself.

There is no limit to taste and enjoyment

Some people of modern time today advise that the private life of man should not be interfered by religion. Everyone can do and enjoy freely whatever one pleases. As a result man is free to satisfy his desires and enjoy himself to his hearts content without any restriction. In this respect he is not answerable to anyone. If you ask any of these pleasure-lovers whether they have reached the limit of their enjoyment and nothing more is left for them to desire, their reply will be in the negative. He would say that he has still countless wishes to realize. In fact, the satisfaction of one wish gives rise to another wish, and there is no end to it.

Open Adultery

If a couple in the western civilisation want to indulge in sexual intercourse with each other, there is no restriction, whatsoever, to stop them from this. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that a time will come when people will commit adultery in public view on the road and there will be none to stop them from this. If there is a man who advises them to do this behind a tree or wall he will be a pious man of that time. That time has come and we are seeing all this today with our own eyes.

Rape cases in America

If a man wants to satisfy his sexual urge in unlawful ways all facilities are available to him for committing this sin with the mutual consent of the partner without a fear of censure from any quarters. Notwithstanding this, Ameri-

ca is the country where the largest number of rapes are committed every year. This is because after getting tired of adultery committed with the mutual consent man's insatiable desire for adultery urges him to enjoy the sensation of rape. As already stated man's desire, if left uncontrolled and unbridled knows no limits and ends.

InsatiableThirst

There is a disease called جوع البقر (*Joo'ul baqar*) in the Arabic language, gluttony being its English equivalent. In this disease the patient's hunger does not find satisfaction with all the quality and quantity of the food that he is given to eat. There is another disease called استسقاء (*Istisqaa*) in the Arabic language in which the thirst of a man becomes insatiable with any quantity of the water he may drink to quench it. Man's desires may be compared to these two diseases which cannot be kept under restraint, unless they are suppressed and controlled by the laws of the *Shari'ah*. If left free, these desires go on increasing by leaps and bounds.

Put some resistance

Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have forbidden us to pursue all the desires because they may throw man into the ditch of destruction. We have been advised to control them and keep them within the reasonable limits laid down by the *Shari'ah*. In doing so you may feel some difficulty in the beginning. A man used to listenng to the Radio programmes of music and enjoying the musical concerts and dramas on the Television will find it quite annoying in the beginning to forego and forget these enjoyments. However, if man wants to save his Self from destruction he should try to put some resistance like a patient who tolerates bitter doses of a medicine.

Self over-powers the weak

Almighty Allah has created this 'Self' in man with a peculiar characteristic. If a man decides to oppose it firmly, despite all the distress, hardships and sufferings involved the desire begins to give way and yield to man's resolution. This 'Self' and Satan overpower him who shows weakness before them and obeys them, but they slacken their grip and surrender before those who stand against them and decide to confront them with an iron will and determination. As a result, the distress and difficulties faced in opposing 'Self' will disappear one by one and thus man ultimately will defeat and overpower his 'Self'.

The 'Self' is like a suckling child

Allama Busairi رحمة الله عليه was a very prominent saint. His eulogistic poem, namely "Qasidah Burdah", in praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is famous all over the Muslim world. It contains a couplet full of wisdom.

النفس كالطفل ان تهمله شب على
حب الرضاع وان تفطمه ينفطم

The 'Self' of man is like a little suckling child which is suckling the milk of his mother and he has become used to it. If he is weaned from suckling by force, the child will protest against this by crying. Now according to Allama Busaire's opinion, if the parents decide to get rid of this problem, fury and fuss of the child by letting him continue suckling, the child will not give up suckling even when he grows into a young man. Suckling has become his nature, he refuses to eat hard food. There are, however, no parents in the world who will leave the child in this state. They will wean him from suckling by all means because it ensures the child's welfare.

The Self is fond of sins

Allama Busairi has further said that man's Self is like a child. It has become fond of sins. If it is left undisturbed and uncontrolled in this condition, committing whatever sins it likes (e.g., casting sinful glances, telling lies, backbiting, accepting bribes and indulging in usurious dealings) for the only reason that reliquishing these sins will be hard upon the 'Self' then what will be the result? The result will be that this Self will pass its entire life in these sins and will never receive peace.

Real peace is in Allah's remembrance

Note carefully that there is no peace in disobeying Allah. You might collect all the worldly resources of life, yet you cannot have peace. I have set before you an example from the Western society where there is great abundance of wealth, a high standard of living. All avenues of enjoyment and pleasure -seeking are wide open before them. Inspite of all this they have no peace. They cannot sleep without taking sleeping pills. Why is it so? It is because they are immersed in sins and disobedience to Allah. Peace resides only in Allah's remembrance.

اَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ

Beware! the hearts receive peace and contentment from Allah's remembrance. (13:28)

You can never receive peace as long as you are committing sins and disobeying Allah.

Almighty Allah grants peace and contentment only to those who remember Allah in their hearts. You will find people who are poor careworn and starving, yet they have in their hearts the blessings of peace and contentment. So one who desires to have peace and tranquillity must quit

sins by undergoing a little hardship and taking a firm stand against the seduction of Self.

Allah's promise cannot be false

Besides, Allah has also made this promise:

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

And those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths. (29:69)

This verse declares that there are those who strive hard in the path of Allah, inspite of the unfavourable conditions and opposition of their society and the demands of their own Self and Satan. Allah guides them on to His straight path. As regards the words

لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

we shall guide them to Our paths

Hazrat Thānawi رحمة الله عليه has explained the true sense of these words saying that "Allah will put them on the straight path by taking them to the path not showing them the path only from a distance. For getting this help from Allah sincere and firm intention and keen longing are, however, necessary. This is Allah's promise and it cannot be false.

In short, "*Mujahadah*" is the name of firm resolution in which a man resolves that he will not commit such and such sins in any circumstances happen what may. The day man presents such a resolute stand against the demands of his Self and Satan, he becomes Allah's beloved whom Allah puts on His straight path as though holding by his hands.

Make your heart worthy of Allah

Thus, the very first step towards correction is "*Mujahadah*" for man will have to take a firm resolution. Dr. Abdul

Hayi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ frequently used to recite this couplet:

آرزوئیں خون ہوں یا حسرتیں پامال ہوں
اب تو اس دل کو بنانا ہے تیرے قابل مجھے

That is; I have to make this heart worthy of you (O Allah) at all costs notwithstanding that for achieving this objective I may have to kill all my pleasant wishes and ambitions. Now the divine light will descend on my heart and it will become a target of Allah's love. Hence forward I shall commit no sins.

You must remember that you will have to face great difficulties in the beginning in relinquishing for ever your favourite plans of pleasures and enjoyments only for the sake of Allah. It will not be long before this struggle of yours will make your Self will become a source of peace and satisfaction for you. In fact, you cannot imagine the pleasure and contentment which you will receive at the thought that you are undergoing all this test and torture for the sake of Allah to seek His pleasure.

Why does a mother endure all distress?

See how a mother sacrifies her comfort for her child. She is sleeping peacefully in her bed on a cold winter night. Her child beside her. The child urinates on the bed. The chilling cold of night stops her leaving the warmth of her bed, but she resists this desire for her chlid and gets up thinking that if the child remains wet he may catch cold and may have fever. Opposing the seduction of her Self she gets up from her warm bed changes the child's clothes, goes out in this cold night and washes the child's clothes with cold water. This is an arduous task, yet she is doing this in the interest of her child's health and welfare.

Love does away with distress

There is a barren women with no child. She consults doctors to cure her sterility and visits holy men for prayer that she may have a child . For this purpose she also uses talisman, charms and such other things. Another woman tells her about the pains a woman has to undergo on account of child birth and in delivering a baby. She will have to get up on cold nights and wash the baby's clothes and do many other odd things for the health and welfare of her baby. In reply the childless woman will says that she would sacrifice the peace and comforts of a thousand winter nights for her baby. This woman places a great value on a baby for which she is willing to go through the tortures and troubles involved in this way. They mean pleasure and comfort to her. So a woman is taking so much pains and is tolerating untold tortures, but she is satisfied with all this and feels contented that she is tolerating these hardships for the sake of her child. With this in mind she feels pleasure in giving up her desires and comforts. Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has expressed the same idea in the following words:

از محبت تلخها شیریں شود

When in love even the bitterest things become sweet. Actions, otherwise hard and despised, turn pleasant in love.

The love of Allah should not be less than that of Laila

In his famous *Masnawi* (poetical work) Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has written many interesting love - stories including the famous story of Laila-Majnoon. In his matchless love for his beloved Laila, Majnoon, the lover, underwent great tortures and distress, yet he was quite satisfied, and pleased with his ordeals in love. He was ready to sacri-

fice all for his love. Maulana Rumi has thus expressed this idea in a couplet:

عشق مولیٰ کے کم از لیلیٰ بود
گوئے گشتن بہر او اولیٰ بود

The love of Allah cannot be less than that of Laila. It is, therefore, a credit to become (kicked and thrown like) a ball.

Love of Money

In order to take up his job, an employee has to get up early in the morning.It is winter and cold outside a man is sleeping comfortably on a warm bed. He has to go to his job, leaving behind his wife and children at home. After having toiled the whole day he will come back home late at night. There is a good number of workers who go to their work, leaving their children sleeping and come back at a time when the children have gone to bed. If anyone advises him to give up such an arduous job for the sake of his comfort and his family, he will reject this advice with contempt. He is pleased to get up.and go to his job at an early hour, leaving behind his wife and children. This is due to the love of the salary which he will draw at the end of the month. For the sake of this love all his troubles and exertions for earning this salary have become pleasant for him. If he by chance loses his job at anytime he becomes deeply aggrieved and strives hard for another job. This is to say that in the way of love all hurdles and difficulties turn to be pleasure and enjoyment.

In the same way it is, indeed, difficult to give up sins. In the beginning one finds oneself unable of giving up some sins being committed for a long time, but when one resolves to relinquish it, divine help comes to his res-

cue with the result that the pains and distresses involved in quitting a sin in obedience to Allah's command begin to yield pleasure and joy.

Acquaint yourself with worship

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once mentioned a wise point. He said: This 'Self' of man is fond of pleasure. This pleasure is not confined to any particular type. The Self craves for pleasure and enjoyment alone despite its nature and constituents. You have made this 'Self' addicted to a pleasure which is in reality unpleasant and disgustful and the 'Self' finds taste and enjoyment in it on account of the habit. Try to make it accustomed to the pleasure of Allah's worship and devotion and to the joys of passing life according to the injunctions of Allah. Then you will see that it will not be long before this 'Self' begins to feel pleasure and enjoyment in this transformed life of piety and purity.

مے سے غرض نشاط ہے کس روسیاہ کو
اک گونہ بے خودی مجھے دن رات چاہیے

This is a couplet from a poem composed by the renounced Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib. Our Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ interpreted it in a very unique way. According to him the couplet means: This sinful man does not drink wine for the sake of pleasure like other drunkards. He thus expresses himself: I drink it only that I may remain beside myself the whole night and day. When you have accustomed me to wine I am enveloped in a state of rapture. If you had accustomed me to Allah's remembrance and obedience, I would have received the same rapture and taste in Allah's remembrance. It is your mistake that you have accustomed me to wine instead of these virtuous occupations.

You will receive great enjoyment in negating the Self

This '*Mujahadah*' appears to be difficult in the beginning, as it demands that one should oppose one's Self when it incites one to the pursuit of desires. It is hard indeed to check yourself from backbiting when your friends freely indulging in it in a jolly assembly. Remember that the task of abstinance appears to be difficult from a distance but when you once take a firm resolution against this sin, Allah's help will overtake you and in this opposition of the seduction of 'Self' you will find a pleasure much greater than that you found in obeying the dictates of your Self.

Cultivate the taste of *Iman* (Faith)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith: Once a man felt in his heart an urge to cast a glance on a forbidden sight and who is there who does not feel such an urge? His heart was in a fix whether to cast the glance on the sight or not. The heart struggled hard and at last got control on the urge. In return for such a struggle and exertion Allah granted him a pleasure which far exceeds the pleasure of satisfying the forbidden urge. This is a promise from the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is available in the books of Ahadith. (Musnad, vol. 5, p. 264)

This promise is not confined to protecting the eyes from falling on forbidden sights, but it is general in its scope and applies to renouncing all sorts of sins. For example the sin of backbiting is pleasing, but a man holds his tongue back from it, just when it was on the verge of doing it. In the exercise of this Self-control there is a pleasure and when man becomes used to it, a relation and love springs up between him and Allah.

The Essence of *Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism)

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said something very instructive and worth remembering. The essence of *'Tasaw-wuf,* the Maulana said, abstinence is that when one feels lazy and hesitant in discharging some religious duties, e.g. the prayer, he should withstand with courage this hesitation and discharge the duty. Similarly, when his heart is inclined to commit some sin, he should oppose this inclination also with courage. This exertion and struggle will generate relation with Allah and develop that relation. A man who attains this capacity requires nothing more. Thus when a man crushes his desires with strenuous effort his heart becomes a mirror to reflect and absorb divine light.

The Heart has to be broken

My respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to quote an example in this behalf. In the olden days he said, there used to be Unani physicians who prepared medicines with by burning gold, silver, lead etc., to ashes commonly known as kushta. He said that the more the metal was burnt to reduce it to ashes, the more effective was the medicine. My respected father compared man's desires to the metals so processed. If these desires are crushed, burnt and reduced to something like ashes, then man's heart will become strong and worthy to receive Allah's love. The more man breaks his heart the more beloved it will become in the sight of Allah The renowned, poet Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has expressed this idea in a couplet:

نہ بچا بچا کے تو رکھ اسے ترا آئینہ ہے وہ آئینہ
جو شکستہ ہو تو عزیز تر ہے نگاہِ آئینہ ساز میں

This means: Your heart is like a mirror which, when

broken, becomes dearer in the sight of the maker of the mirror. so the more you subject your heart to strife and exertion in the cause of Allah, the dearer it will become in His sight. The heart is to be broken and purged of all desires and lusts to become worthy of Allah's attention and love. Our Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to recite a couplet:

یہ کہہ کے کاسہ ساز نے پیالہ پٹخ دیا
اب اور کچھ بنائیں گے اس کو بگاڑ کے

It means: The potter broke the pot by throwing it down and said that he would make another and a better pot in place of it.

Do not think that the troubles you are receiving and the tortures you are enduring by crushing your desires are going waste. By this process of *Mujahadah*" when this heart becomes a resting - place for Allah's love, remembrance and devotion, you will receive a joy and rapture before which the entire enjoyments received from committing sins and disobeying Allah are not worth an iota.

All that is needed is a little resolution and sincere work. In the beginning everything looks difficult but it will become easy later on. This is "*Mujahadah*".

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

المجاهد من جاهد نفسه

That is, a *Mujahid* is one who struggles with his Self, crushes and suppresses his desires, instead of becoming a toy in the hands of his desires. May Allah protect us from this disgrace and help us to control efficiently our desires. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

And we close with the call that all praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

Series 16

ESSENTIALITY OF *'MUJAHADAH'*

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 17th May, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

True "*Mujahadah*" means the act of confronting the Self in such a way that man does not yield to the desires, demands and dictates of 'Self', but takes the opposite course by crushing them all. He who wishes to reform and ameliorate his Self has to take to '*Mujahadah*' and endure the distress and tortures which confront him in his struggle against his carnal desires. This is called '*Mujahadah*'.

ESSENTIALITY OF *MUJAHADAH*

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ط وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

امنت باللہ صدق اللہ مولانا العظیم و صدق رسولہ النبی الکریم و

نحن علیٰ ذالک من الشٰہدین والشٰکرین والحمد للہ رب العالمین

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our souls and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our Prophet and our. Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah send mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions and bless them and salute them in great deal.

And those who strive in us we surely guide them to or paths. Indeed, Allah is with the good. (29:69)

The Reality of *Mujahadah*

The gist of what was said in the earlier meeting about '*Mujahadah*' is that we should try to leave the carnal desires. This is the meaning of *Mujahadah*. This has to be discussed to day in greater details, so that it may become amply clear why it is necessary to take to *Mujahadah*.

Mujahadah in worldly affairs

It is difficult to pursue *Deen* (Faith) without resorting to *Mujahadah*. It is necessary even in the execution of worldly affairs. In order to earn a living one has to crush the dictates of the Self. The man feels inclined to take rest

at home but does not. He cannot earn his living, unless he exerts himself and works hard on his job.

Cultivation of the habit of *Mujahadah* from childhood

It is necessary to train a child for *Mujahadah* from his childhood. When the child is sent to school for the first time he resents and dislikes this. He does not feel inclined to go to school, but he is induced to do so by different ways. This is *Mujahadah.* Man has, therefore, to do many things against his natural disposition to receive education, earn his living, and attain all other objectives of life. If anyone decides not to do anything which is disagreeable to his nature, such a man can succeed neither in his worldly life nor in the religious field.

There will be no *Mujahadah* in Paradise

There are three worlds created by Allah. In one of these worlds all desires will be fulfilled without your doing anything against your will; everything will happen according to your sweet will. In this world man will be free to pursue his desires, without any hindrance. That world is the world of Paradise about which the Holy Qur'an has said:

وَلَكُمْ فِيْهَا مَاتَشْتَهِيْٓ اَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيْهَا مَاتَدَّعُوْنَ (سورهٔ حم سجده ۳۱)

You shall get in it (Paradise) all that your hearts desire and there will be for you what you call for. (41:31)

Details are available about this in the Ahadith. For example; if you desire to drink pomegranate juice, it will be before you the moment you desire it. You will get, by the grace of Allah, everything that you may desire. There

will be no need to suppress and crush your desires in Paradise, nor will you have to undergo any *Mujahadah* there. That is the world of Paradise. May Allah grant us a seat in Paradise by His mercy.

The world of Hell

The second world, i.e. Hell is just the opposite of Paradise. Everything in Hell will be tortuous and contrary to one's desire and choice. Every act in Hell will be painful and full of distress. That is the world of Hell. May Allah save every Muslim from that. *Aameen.*

The present world

Our world is the world in which things occur which are pleasant as well as unpleasant to us. There is joy and grief, distress and comfort. There is none in this world whose life is exclusively a bed of roses or a bed of thorns. Every comfort and joy has some painful features and every pain and distress has some pleasant aspects. In this world you may be a great capitalist, a millionaire, or a man of countless resources, yet you cannot claim that you have always been comfortable and carefree having, never tasted worry and anxiety, or that things have always been going according to your wishes and choice. Comfort and discomfort, joy and sorrow, health and sickness go side by side in this world of ours. It is not possible for anyone in this world to have all joy with no grief, nor all grief with no joy. This world is a place of trials and ordeals. A poet has thus expressed this idea:

قید حیات بند و غم اصل میں دونوں ایک ہیں
موت سے پہلے آدمی غم سے نجات پائے کیوں

That is, the prison of life and the confinement of

grief both are one and the same. So, man cannot get rid of grief before his death. Allah has created this world that you may enjoy and also may suffer from distress. It is, therefore, not possible for man to be relieved of pains and grief until his death. What to say of the common people even the Prophets عليهم السلام the most beloved personalities of Allah, were not spared from the tortures and distresses of this world. At times they suffered more grievously than the common people. They, too, had to face, situations distasteful to their nature. No man, whether he is a believer or an unbeliever can remain safe from these bitter and pinching vicinitudes of life in this world.

Seek the pleasure of Allah

In this worldly life you have to face things which are disgustful and abhorrent to your nature and temperament. When such is the situation from which there is no escape, then there are two ways open to you. One way is to do things which are against, and abhorrent to your nature and which involve pains and troubles, and yet you gain no reward and benefit for them in the Hereafter nor is Allah pleased with them.

The other way open to man is to work against the inclinations of his nature and Self and crush his desires to ameliorate his Hereafter and to please Allah. The Prophets of Allah عليهم السلام advise that in this world there is no escape for man from doing things which go against his nature and will, whether he appreciates this situation or not. Man should, therefore, resolve firmly that, if it is unavoidable to do things which are against his nature, why not should do only such of them that will please Almighty Allah.

For example it is the prayer time and the prayer-call (*Azan*) is coming from the nearby mosque but you do not feel inclined to go to the mosque on account of lethargy. In

such a situation you follow the dictate of your Self and remain in your bed, ignoring the prayer-call. Then somebody knocks at the door. The man is so important that you have to leave your comfortable bed and go out with him. The result is that you opposed your Self, crushed your desire, disturbed your rest, and could not avoid the trouble. Man should think positively that he has no control over troubles and distress; then why should he not endure these troubles and disturbance for Allah's pleasure? Thinking this way, he should at once get up and go to the mosque to offer prayers.

When receiving the King's commands

Our Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say useful things for us. Once he said: You are feeling laziness and inconvenience in going to the mosque for prayers, e.g. the *Fajr* or the *Tahajjud* prayers. You have risen from sleep, but your eyes are still heavy with sleep and in such a situation you do not want to leave your bed. Now in this condition if you receive a message that the King or the Head of the state wants to confer on you a great honour how will you react to this. Your sleep will diminish instantly. Because you place great value on the King's award for the sake of which you are ready to oppose your desires and your natural inclinations. When you can sacrifice your rest and comfort and sweet sleep for the honour to be confirmed by a King why can you not make the same sacrifice for the sake of Almighty Allah, the most Elevated and the Greatest of all King's and Rulers? You should certainly offer this sacrifice.

Almighty Allah will be with them

This has always been the message of the Prophets of Allah that men should form the habit of opposing their Self in doing such acts as are expected to please

Allah and that is what we call "*Mujahadah*". Apparently no benefit is received from the shocks and distresses being suffered unintentionally in "*Mujahadah*". It is, however, Allah's promise that He shall surely guide in His path those who exert themselves sincerely and oppose their Self and desires for His sake.

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ط وَإِنَّ اللهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

And they will not be alone on this path. Those who are walking on this path are among the (the good) and Allah becomes a companion of the good.

The task will become easy

Allah becomes a companion of the *Mujahid* and makes his path easy. It is indeed, very difficult to oppose the 'Self' in the beginning and to do something against the demands of man's natural dispositions. Yet when man decides to struggle against Self in favour of Allah the job becomes smooth and easy, because he has resolved firmly to please his Creator. A man finds it very difficult to offer five-time prayers, yet he fights against his Self and, opposing its seductions and ultimately succeeding some how in making himself a regular *Namazi*. Now not only does he not feel any difficulty in offering the prayers regularly, but he will not allow to miss his prayers even if he is offered a great prize for this. Now with the help of Allah, his *Mujahadah* has made him a regular *Namazi* and a pious man.

Only take a step forward

What is true of prayer (*Namaz*) is true of all other righteous deeds of *Deen*. If man sits idle only contemplating wishfully without action, everything will appear to him diffi-

cult. However, if he once resolves firmly to fight against his Self and opposes his desires, Allah makes his work easy. Hazrat Thanawi رحمہ اللہ علیہ used to quote an example to illustrate this. There is a very long and straight road with rows of trees on both sides of it. Standing on one end of the road, a man looks ahead, he will find that at some distance the two rows of the trees meet each other and block the way. Now if a fool thinks that it is useless to go on this road, because it is blocked, he can never reach his destination. Only that man shall reach his destination who takes a step forward and begins his journey, in spite of the fact that the road appears to be blocked at some distance ahead. After covering a little distance he will find that the road is not blocked, but it is giving him way, as he advances step by step. Thus, Allah is advising the travellers on the path of *Deen* not to lose heart and sit disappointed, finding the path difficult from a distance. They should go ahead and Allah will render the journey easy. All that is needed is a little courage, determination and resolution to oppose and struggle against the Self. This is what is called *Mujahadah.*

***Mujahadah* is to refrain from some lawful acts also**

The essence of *Mujahadah* is that man should protect himself from unlawful acts and acts that are contrary to the laws of the *Shari'ah* by exercising pressure against his Self. Our Self has, however, become easy going in violating the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* and it is very difficult to divert it to the path of righteousness. In order to tame the Self and follow the straight path of the *Shari'ah* it becomes necessary to stop it even from some unnecessary but lawful actions, so that it may be compelled to relinquish enjoyments. After this it will be habituated to refrain from undesirable and unlaw-

ful actions. This too is called *Mujahadah* in the terminology of the sufis (mystics).

For example, it is not a sin to eat one's fill but the mystics advise against eating too much, because if makes the Self negligent and fond of enjoyments. It is therefore, *Mujahadah* to eat less than what is necessary to satisfy the hunger.

Why should *Mujahadah* be necessary in lawful acts?

Someone put a question to Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Sahib رحمة الله عليه as to why the mystics stop their disciples even from some lawful acts, although Allah has declared them to be lawful. Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه asked the questioner to fold the leaf of a book. This was done. Then Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه asked the questioner to straighten the leaf. He tried but could not make the leaf straight. Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه told him that to make it straight it was necessary to fold it back in the opposite side. When he folded the leaf in the opposite side it became straight as before. Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه then explained that the leaf of this Self stands folded on the side of the sins and cannot be straightened unless it is folded on the opposite side away from the sins. In other words, compel the Self to give up some desirable and permissible acts also and it will become straight like the leaf. This is also a form of *Mujahadah*.

Four kinds of *Mujahadahs*

The respected sufis Spiritual doctors are known to subject their disciples in four kinds of Mujahadahs, viz., (1) Eat less, (2) Speak less, (3) Sleep less, (4) Mix with the people less.

(1) Eating less: In olden days, the respected sufis used to subject their disciples to very hard *Mujahadahs* by reducing their food, to the extent of starvation. Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said that the present age is not

suitable for this kind of *Mujahadah*, as the people are weaker and poorer in health than their predecessors in the past. If they eat less they may fall sick and may be prevented from their usual course of worship on account of weakness. He رحمة الله عليه said that in the present time, if a man follows discipline at the time of eating the benefit of less eating will be obtained. While taking food a stage arrives when a man becomes hesitant whether to continue eating or stop it. When this stage arrives man should stop eating. This will ensure for him the benefit of less eating.

What is the cause of this hesitation at the time of eating? This is due to a confrontation between reason and Self. As there is a taste in the food the Self urges man to eat more to enjoy the taste, the reason urges the person not to eat more, as eating more may disturb his digestion and cause some sickness. The struggle between reason and Self is called hesitation. At such a stage in eating and on other occasions, accept the urge of reason and reject the urge of Self.

Allah's pleasure and freedom from fatness

I heard discussions on this topic many times in the meeting of my respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه, as well as those of Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه and read them in their printed sermons. Later on I happened to read an article on this topic by an expert physician who wrote:

People use medicines to reduce the weight of their bodies some give up eating bread others avoid the midday meal. In modern terminology this is called 'Dieting' The practice of 'Dieting' has spread like an epidemic in Europe. The objective of 'Dieting' is to reduce weight. Women have become more accustomed to 'Dieting' and are taking pills to slim themselves. In so doing sometimes they lose their lives."

Thereafter that physician writes:

My medical opinion is that it is not possible to reduce weight either by giving up a meal or by refraining from eating bread. On the other hand the best way for man to reduce weight is to form a lifelong habit to stop eating a little before fully satisfying his hunger. The physician has concluded his article by giving exactly the same advice namely taking food one should give up eating as soon as he becomes hesitant to continue eating or not. The man who stops eating at the time of this hesitation will never be a prey to obesity, indigestion, nor will it be necessary for him to take to 'Dieting'.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi رحمة الله عليه had recommended the same prescription in his printed sermons many years ago. Now it is up to you to take this prescription either to reduce your weight or to please Allah. If you take this advice to cure your sick Self and to please Allah, you will get reward and your weight will also get reduced automatically. On the other hand if you act upon this advice only to reduce your weight, then you may perhaps succeed in reducing your weight, but you will get no virtue and reward from Allah.

Keeping away from enjoyments

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has greatly simplified matters for us in this behalf. In olden days the respected sufis used to subject their disciples to diverse exercises in the name of *Mujahadah*. There used to be at their monasteries a general kitchen in which, it is said, a kind of soup was prepared which was distributed among the disciples in cups. They had orders that they should, each, mix their soup with an equal part of water and then use that mixture as food, so that the Self might be cured of the vice of enjoying taste. They

were also made to starve from time to time. However, those were different times and we are in a different age. In the same way, the Hakimul Ummah has prescribed treatment keeping in view the age we are living in and the demand of our natures and temperaments. The way, he has prescribed of less eating, serves the purpose of 'Dieting'.

The Frenzy of eating to one's fill

It is not unlawful from the *Shari'ah* point of view to eat to one's fill, but this is a cause of diseases both spiritual and physical. This is because all sins and disobedience are the outcome of eating to one's fill. A man with empty stomach can hardly think of sins and wrongdoings. It has, therefore, been advised that man should try to avoid eating to his fill. This is the *Mujahadah* of 'Less Eating' or Dieting' as they call it.

(2) The *Mujahadah* of speaking less

The second kind of *Mujahadah* is 'speaking less'. We chatter from morning till evening non-stop and there is no brake on this. This is highly undesirable. This tongue will go on committing sins, unless it is kept under strict control. You must remember that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith: It is man's tongue which will cause him to be thrown into Hell face-down, because if it is left uncontrolled with no check, whatsoever, it is bound to indulge in telling lies in backbiting and hurting the hearts of others. These are grievous sins which will take him to Hell.

Save yourself from the sins of the tongue

For avoiding the sins of the tongue man has to undergo the *Mujahadah* of 'Less speaking'. This requires that man should speak only when necessary, avoid talking about useless things and should more his tongue only when it becomes absolutely necessary. Before talking about anything he must first think coolly if it is necessary

and proper for him to talk on that topic if so it is not a sin. Man must guard himself against using his tongue unnecessarily. By following this method man becomes used to speak less. When man feels tempted to speak but suppresses this temptation, he gradually achieves control over his tongue, and then he does not commit sins of telling lies, backbiting and the like.

Lawful Recreation is permitted

Sometimes a few friends get together in their spare times and involve themselves in sinful gossips for nothing. The *Shari'ah* has, however, allowed us to enjoy and recreate. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is himself reported to have said:

روحوا القلوب ساعة فساعة (كنز العمال: ٥٣٥٤)

(Kanzul A'amal - 5354)

This means: provide relief to your hearts from time to time:

How useful and appealing the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are! There is none who knows more than he ﷺ our psychology, needs and temperament. He ﷺ knew it fully well that if the *Ummah* was commanded to do nothing other than remembering Allah and to keep them engaged in reciting His sacred names, they would not be able to do so, because they are not angels. They are human beings. They need, by their very nature, some recreation, like relaxation and light pleasantry with one another. Not only is it lawful but it is also desirable, and it is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However to indulge in such recreation for long hours and waste precious time may lead to sins. The people have, therefore, been advised to talk less, as this is also a kind of *Mujahadah*.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to converse with guests

A man used to call upon my respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه the man was very

talkative. He talked continuously on irrelevant topics. It has been the practice of our elders to honour their guests, listen to them and please them as far as possible. This is a difficult and tiring situation for a busy person. Those whose lives remain fully occupied with work can very well realize this difficulty. The usual practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was that whenever any person called upon him and started talking to him, he ﷺ never turned his face from him but remained listening to him unless the visitor himself turned his face. The words of the relevant Hadith are:

حتی یکون هو المنصرف (شمائل ترمذی باب ماجاء فی تواضع رسول الله ﷺ)

Until the visitor himself departed.(Shamail Tirmidhi).

This is indeed a very difficult task. Some people are continuous talkers and it is very tiring to listen to them patiently. It has, however, been the practice of our elders to pay full attention to such visitors in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

A Method of Reform

Any one visiting my father with the intention of remedy, he used to point out his short comings. This visitor used to call upon my respected father رحمة الله عليه and the latter listened patiently to his conversation. One day that visitor expressed his desire to become a disciple of my respected father رحمة الله عليه for spiritual guidance and training and asked for some *Zikr* to recite. My respected father رحمة الله عليه advised him that he did not need any incantation or recitation. What he needed was to hold his tongue and maintain complete silence in the meetings. The *Mujahadah* prescribed for him of sitting silent was more difficult for him than a thousand *Mujahadahs*. By dint of this single *Mujahadah* he completed, with Allah's help, all the stages of his spiritual course. My respected father رحمة الله عليه had diagnosed his disease of unnecessary and irrelevant talking. When this was cured all other weaknesses and short-comings disappeared. Thus, only after

a short period of time Allah bestowed upon him a high rank. Thus, like a specialist physician, the Shaikh prescribes for his disciples spiritual treatment according to the disease of each individual patient. This is the *Mujahadah* of 'Less speaking'.

(3) Less Sleeping

The third '*Mujahadah*' is sleeping less. In olden days the disciples were prevented from sleeping except a little. It is well known that Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه used to offer his Fajr prayers with the ablution (*Wudu*) performed for the Isha prayers. The saints have, however, advised that a man must sleep at least six hours during the 24 hours of the day. Sleeping less than six hours may cause sickness. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has stated that if anyone is addicted to sleeping at wrong hours he should give up this habit and follow proper sleeping hours. This change of sleeping hours also comes within the definition of 'Less sleeping' and is a kind of *Mujahadah.*

(4) Reduce your contacts with the people

The fourth *Mujahadah* consists in reducing contacts and mixing with the people to the minimum, because the wider a man's circle of acquaintance, the more exposed he is to the opportunities of sins. You may experience for yourself the truth of this assertion. Today it has become a recognised art to widen the circle of one's contacts which is called 'Public Relations'. The objective of this department of public Relations is to bring more and more people under the circle of your contacts and acquaintance and thereby to increase your influence among the people, so that you may reap all sorts of benefits from these contacts. Our elders have however, advised us to reduce, rather than increase, our contacts with the public as far as possible.

The Heart is a Mirror

Almighty Allah has made man's heart a mirror. Whatever passes by a man's eyes is, like a film, impressed upon man's heart. When man's circle of contact is wide, the heart will re-

ceive impression from good as well as bad people. When people involved in vicious activities will meet him, the heart will be impressed with the vices of their bad activities, thus spoiling the purity of the heart. Hence the advice to have contacts with the public to the minimum. the lessor a man's contacts with the public, the greater the possibility of increase in his relation with Allah. Maulana Rumi has said:

تعلق حجاب است و بے حاصلی
چوں پیوندھا بگسلی واصلی

Maulana means to say in this couplet that contacts with the public serve as a screen between man and his relation with Allah. The greater a man's intimacy and friendship with the people, the weaker and lesser will be his relations with Almighty Allah. So the advice forwarded here to reduce contacts with the public is subject to the condition that this should not adversely affect man's liability to the rights of the servants of Allah which has to be discharged at all costs. It should not be man's tendency to widen his circle of contacts and acquaintances unnecessarily. This is a kind of *Mujahada* named 'Reduction of contacts with the people'.

These *Mujahadahs* (spiritual drills or exercises) have been prescribed in order to control our 'Self' and to stop it from seducing us to commit sins and unlawful acts. Every body should, therefore, try to take up these *Mujahadah* but under the expert guidance of some experienced Sheikh. A disciple cannot himself decide the quantity of food he should take, the time of his sleeping and the number and type of people he should contact. Some Sheikh will guide him on these points and he will - god willing - receive benefit from these *Mujahadahs*.

May Allah help us all to act accordingly. *Aameen*!

واخر دعوانا ان الحمدلله رب العالمين

And we close with the call that all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the world's.